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# ITALICS.

BRIEF NOTES

ON POLITICS, PEOPLE, AND PLACES IN ITALY,

IN 1864.

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BY

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

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VV. a. 45

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T. RICHARDS, PRINTER, 37, GREAT QUEEN STREET.

TO

HER EXCELLENCY

THE COUNTESS USEDOM,

This Book,

PARTLY WRITTEN UNDER HER ROOF,

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

# NOTE.

SINCE the earlier sheets of this work have passed through the press, an important change has taken place in Italian affairs. The engagement of Napoleon III to recall his troops from Rome in two years' time will, *if fulfilled*, lead to a position of Pope and King in the highest degree favourable to the great hope of Italy—the annexation of Rome. It remains, however, to be seen, how far such an engagement will be found binding on the Imperial contracting party at the end of a period amply sufficient for the intervention of complications annulling the stipulations of twenty modern State-Treaties. The old project of an Italian Confederation under French influence can hardly be deemed abandoned nor the game played out, so long as a single French regiment remains at Civita Vecchia.

The transference of the capital of Italy from Turin to Florence is, in any case, a material result of the new combination. Whether such a change be worth its cost just now, is a point on which opinions may reasonably vary. Perhaps, after all, it would be fortunate for Italy if her seat of government remained fixed,—not for a few years only, but for ever, within the storied walls of the beautiful old city which four years ago so nobly set the example of self-abnegation to aid the great cause of national unity—a city whose atmosphere, physical and moral, is untainted by the *Malaria* of Rome.

*Sept.* 1864.

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# *ITALICS.*

## CHAPTER I.

### ITALIA RINASCENTE.

DESCENDING from the Alps into Italy is always like passing from winter into summer. Be the season of the year what it may, we never fail to feel the same sense of coming into sunshine, and into the freedom of outdoor life; and the first time we have occasion to open our lips after crossing the frontier, we are sure to air our Italian—"*dolce favella*"—with all the satisfaction belonging to the use of a cool smooth fabric suited for warm weather and idle hours. The kindly courtesy of the people—that nation of born ladies and gentlemen—completes the transition, and we feel that we have left behind the atmosphere of black frosts, moral and physical, and may expand ourselves happily in a much milder medium. As we sweep down the

giant hills, and look over the vine-wreathed slopes and chestnut forests, stretching far away to the towers and domes of sun-bright Italy, we recall the summer days of childhood—perhaps those days in old country houses when the season was solemnly opened with a great May-day exodus from winter to summer dwelling rooms—fresh delicious days, when all the coming months lay glowing before us like one long bright holiday, and the Present overflowed with joy, and the Future had just enough of reserve of pleasures in store to save us from regret (little epicures that we were!) to be living over that joyous passing hour.

For the last few years this entrance into Italy has had, however, another interest added to all the old and natural attractions. There is a human Spring reviving the beautiful land after its long winter of frostbound oppression. The darkness and the torpor are passed away, and a new life is pouring through the nation and bursting out into a thousand fresh forms wherever we turn our eyes. It would be a mind singularly constituted which could visit Italy just now without feeling an interest in the vast change going on

therein, greater than that which we all experienced in years gone by, when we approached it as "la terre des morts"—the land of the mighty departed heroes, and poets, and painters—of Cæsar, and Dante, and Michael Angelo.

The Italian Revolution, mixed as it is, like all human things, with elements ignoble, and somewhat barren in the production of those great men whom lesser convulsions have rarely failed to draw forth,—is yet, assuredly, judged in all soberness, one of the grandest events in modern history. It is no sudden gust of national passion impetuously overturning the thrones of the past, but a slowly elaborated achievement wrought out with immense sacrifice—sacrifice not only of lives and gold, such as every Revolution claims, but of provincial and national interests and prejudices, which are the last things usually abjured in such convulsions. It is not an outbreak of fanaticism either religious or political, the work of men disgusted by the falsehood of one system, and blindly rushing at its opposite. Rather do we see with regret the Italian Catholic caring so little to cast down the idols of his church, and rejoice to find the Italian citizen content to replace

political despotism by a Constitutional Monarchy, and not by any more democratic system for whose enjoyment he is yet untrained. Lastly, it is not a Revolution of a single class of the population—a cabal of nobles, or a rebellion of the middle ranks, or a riot of the mob—nor yet is it the work of a great capital city, deciding by itself the cause of the whole country, as Paris has so often presumed to do for France. Never, perhaps, in any history has a revolution been so completely the reverse of all this. Before the campaign of 1859 (as I have been told by a statesman then in Italy), men of all ranks, nobles, professional men, and citizens, to the number of many hundreds, all severally moved by the same desire, went from every part of the country to ask of Cavour and Victor Emanuel—"What can be done to free and unite Italy?" And from the opening of the war to this time, it would be impossible to tell which class has been most earnest in its efforts, most ready with its sacrifices, from the old historic houses of Ricasoli and D'Azeglio to the poorest of the artizans and the peasantry. The great cities, Florence, Milan, Bologna, Naples, Palermo, are not more engaged in the cause than

the lesser burghs, the villages, the scattered hamlets over the whole peninsula. It is Italy, the country, which has arisen—Italians, the race, who have made the Revolution.

In a peculiar manner, also, the unification of Italy forms an experiment to the last degree interesting and important at this time of the world's history. On a large scale, in a country possessing a splendid geographical position as well as unparalleled historical associations, and among a race with rare endowments, is being tried the solution of problems, social and political, on which the character of the future of our race for centuries, must in great measure depend. Can populations, which have for ages been degraded by all the evils of a double despotism, spiritual and political, be raised to steady self-government by that vast machinery which modern science has given us—education, free press, and free locomotion? Can the principles of constitutionalism, evolved by ages of effort in England,—the freedom which has come to us

> Slowly broadening down
> From precedent to precedent—

be grafted on another land, and become an equal

source of prosperity and peace to a race the moral antipodes of the Anglo-Saxon? Can the downfal of a vast Church, whose shadow has been the graveyard of religious thought for a thousand years, be the signal for a resurrection of Faith and Piety? Can the overthrow of a whole social system lead to social re-organisation and social regeneration, wherein for Ignorance we may find Education; for Brigandage, Commerce and Manufactures; and for Celibacy of clergy the reverence of Marriage and rehabilitation of Woman? These are surely problems of surpassing importance, and, besides them, we may perhaps discern in the peculiar conditions of Italy the opening of other political questions hardly less significant.

If the existing order of things in Europe is ever to be so modified as to relieve the nations from the terrible and yearly-increasing weight of gigantic armies; if each is not to be crushed to protect itself from the other, it must, doubtless be effected mainly by three great reforms: by the establishment of Free Constitutions, which shall put it out of the power of kings, for their dynastic purposes, to embroil nations against

their will; by the amalgamation of small states into sufficiently large ones (of fifteen or twenty millions), to enable them to act as Great Powers; and, lastly, by the restoration of those natural boundaries of Nationalities which appear to be indispensable to the real cohesion of populations. By these means it would appear possible that each country might obtain sufficient guarantee of the stability of peace with its neighbour to warrant the diminution of its armaments, instead of prolonging further the neck and neck race towards universal bankruptcy in which one now vies with another, expending on the myriads of soldiers which challenge the myriads of their neighbours the treasures which would render each prosperous beyond example. As time goes on, and the competition becomes more terrible, as the armies of half a century ago, which consisted of eighty or an hundred thousand men, swell to hosts of two or three, or four hundred thousand, and only desolating conscriptions can supply the vast levies they demand—the problem becomes daily more urgent, and its possible solution more important. The cost of a great European army, such as statesmen aver to

be indispensable in the present day, to give the nation supporting it a place among the great Continental Powers, is from £12,000,000 to £16,000,000 per annum. This charge may, in a certain sense, be considered as doubly imposed on the country, for it has to be raised in money to pay and support the soldier, and it has to be deducted from the productive labour, to which the soldier, if left in his civil-capacity, would have contributed. The nation is drained of the finest of its youths, and also compelled to pay down an enormous annual sum to support them in unproductive labour, the *per contra* of their expenditure in the country neither making up for the loss of their hands, nor for the taxation needed for their cash payments. To conceive the relief to the revenue, and the impulse given to every kind of free labour by the return of four hundred thousand men to a civil life, is to imagine probably a greater boon to any country in Europe than any territorial conquests, any colonial acquisitions, any mechanical discoveries, or any political reforms could possibly effect; yet this boon is every year further and further away under the present order of things. The

one hope for it lies, as we have said, in the formation of a real Balance of Power of great and free Nationalities, needing no Treaties of '15, nor diplomatic arts, nor huge armies to keep them safe and firm, but standing on their own basis of voluntary loyalty. Towards such a millennium the formation of a Free and United Italy is a real approach, albeit her first step has inevitably been the creating of another huge army to vie with all the rest.

Italy is not doing her work by halves. She is putting out her whole strength to the task before her. In a political sense, it is improbable that such efforts would long be sustained by any people, unless such visible success should crown them as should serve to silence discontent. In a financial sense, it is still more unlikely that the same outlay can be continued without national bankruptcy. Already it is calculated the kingdom has cost the nation more than £40,000,000 sterling, or upwards of £2 a head. The annual deficit in the revenue is 300,000,000 of francs (of which 30 millions are expended on the Two Sicilies over and above the revenue derived from them); and this deficit neither the sale of rail-

ways, or royal domains, nor the confiscation of monastic property, nor general development of national resources and increased taxation, is even *expected* to supply. It is, therefore, visibly a battle of limited duration. Italy must gain her point, complete, organise, and firmly establish herself as a great and free country, or in a very short time her arms will drop powerless, the struggle will fail, and a worse state of things than the past must almost inevitably supervene. She has great resolution, great energy, great resources of all kinds. She has also great difficulties, great weaknesses, great enemies. Who can watch such a struggle even afar off, without some stirring of the blood? Who can go into Italy now and think of it only as the scene of old classic story, or the great museum of Cinquecento Art? While Waterloo was being fought, there would have been found few geologists or botanists to chip rocks or dissect wild flowers on the field of Quatre Bras. Even a woman is not called upon to spend her time beyond the Alps just now in strolling through galleries, criticising the singers in San Carlo and the Pergola, and choosing mosaics and *merletto antico*. If she can do no more,

she may at least keep open her eyes and ears, and ask questions of those who may be willing and able to give her information. She may read on the spot the local publications and periodicals which carry with them the feeling of the hour, and (if she desire it) she may easily obtain from the kindly and courteous officials of Italy all possible reports and statements illustrative of their work. Perhaps, the result of such superficial inquiries as these must necessarily be of trifling value. They can at best assume to be only of temporary interest, addressed to those who have already studied Italian affairs, and merely desire to carry on their knowledge of them a few months later. Trusting that this little book will be understood to have no pretensions greater than these, I have ventured to put down as succinctly as may be the facts concerning the new order of things which have become known to me during five visits to Italy, and especially a residence in Tuscany and Liguria from October last to May 1864. A few sketches of places and people are added, which may, perhaps, recall pleasant reminiscences to other travellers. Assuredly, Italy possesses above all countries that peculiar

charm which makes us always recur to the thought of it with a glow of tenderness; and it must be a very bad description indeed—so bad as to fail utterly to recall the original—which will not give a little pleasure to an old "forestiere."

## CHAPTER II.

### ITALY MENDS HER WAYS.

IT is a common event all over Europe when those who are engaged in making excavations, and laying foundations for buildings in old cities, come upon Roman remains: Baths, villas, temples, palaces lie everywhere under our feet, if we only dig deep enough to find them. In a very similar way, when we have groped about for some new grounds of civilisation and cleared away some long-existing nuisance, it is ten to one but we fall on the traces of the Romans and their wise old laws and noble works, and find that they made our discovery twenty centuries ago, and put it in practice on the scale of the empire of the world. We, in London, are just now making drains which may match those of the half-mythologic king who built the Cloaca Maxima, and Italy has taken a vast step by dis-

covering that two thousand years ago she had great straight roads which led from Rome everywhere and from everywhere to Rome, and that those same roads were the first missionaries of civilisation. Pictures and statues, and marble Duomos and bronze gates of Paradise, are all very good things in their way; but the history of Italy shows that their existence is perfectly compatible with uttermost oppression—uttermost stagnant corruption of the whole social atmosphere. No painting of Raphael's has helped any city to self-government. The very finest of Michael Angelo's sculptures has failed to improve the condition—moral, political, or sanitary—of a single parish. Nay, it would actually seem, if we consider which were the great artistic ages, classic and Renaissant, that there was some singular correlation between the production and patronage of high works of art, and the synchronous apparition of the most portentous depravity the world has known. The century of the Borgias was the very culmination of Italian painting and architecture. The greatest dilettante in history was Nero. No other land, probably, in all the earth has been the scene of so much cruelty, per-

fidy, and pollution, as Italy, the land of Art; and no other ages in the dark story of that land are black as those of the Cæsars and the Medici—the times of which the sculptures in the Vatican and the Museo Borbonico, the paintings in the Pitti and the Uffizij are the relics! Does art, then, make Saints and Heroes? Nay, it cannot withhold man from a single vice, nor stay the hand of one solitary tyrant. Rather does it gild over corruption otherwise too gross and hideous, and add a delusive nimbus to the crown of the despot, who redeems the tortures of a nation by picking up the brush of a painter. Italy has had enough of such. Were salvation to have been attainable for her through pigments and chipped marble, she would have been beatified, yea canonised, by the world for three hundred years. But it was not so to be. Before her last revolution, where had all her glorious Art left Italy? Not merely poor in mere commercial sense, poor in trade, poor in manufactures, in agriculture; not merely behind all the nations of the north in inventions and machinery. This would have been a poverty more than outbalanced by her transcendent achievements in higher lines of

human labour. But Italy's Art left her poor in Freedom, poor in morals, poor in all such conditions of human happiness as security of person and property, a righteous system of jurisprudence, and social confidence between man and man; poor even in Religion itself—that true Religion, which does not stop when it has built splendid churches and endowed magnificent monasteries, and obtained from a priest a passport through purgatory to paradise. In all these things her Art has left Italy poor—poorer, perhaps, than any other country in Europe. For a *pendant* to the Vatican, Rome has got her prison of San Michele, crowded with men, kept for months and years untried in the poisonous cells *al segreto* (equivalent to death in a Roman summer), or else,—after the iniquitous mummery of a Papal political trial,—huddled so as to provoke from De Merode the brutal jest to their jailor: "Why do you not make more room by hanging these wretches like hams from the ceiling?" Is the room in the Vatican containing Raphael's Transfiguration and Domenichino's St. Jerome a fair compensation for one of these dungeons full of living men, pining away the

best years of life in unmerited misery? Perhaps some dilettanti in England may think so. The mothers and wives of the incarcerated wretches are likely to be of another opinion.

But if any number of square feet of canvas, covered by the very finest designs, are not found successful in stopping judicial murder and robbery, in putting down despots, or improving society, it does appear, strangely enough, that a certain amount of iron tramways with locomotives running up and down them,—or even of good post-roads with requisite appliances of vehicles and horses, is not inefficacious in these respects. Tyrants, lay and ecclesiastic, seem to have the same difficulty in sustaining the scream of a railway whistle, that ghosts used to feel at the crowing of the cock. Mankind is only manageable by such gentry in a stationary condition. Locomotive humanity is always troublesome, full of new ideas, wanting to have rights like other humanities encountered in its travels, and generally fuming and spluttering and wanting safety-valves in the most inconvenient manner.

We can fancy a good old despot of the Henry VIII type (not Mr. Froude's Henry VIII, but

the Bluebeard we used to know long ago)—a great burly tyrant who cut off men's heads from *gaieté de cœur*, and thought nothing of it—as brought into unnatural juxtaposition with steam-engines and being utterly disgusted therewith. A short time since, we heard of a poor labourer in the Fens in Lincolnshire, whose brains were rather of the agricultural order, thickened still more, poor fellow! by the effects of his last illness, but to whom a zealous young clergyman most vigorously expounded his peculiar views on the subject of Justification and the absolute necessity there was for adopting them forthwith. The poor man, who had been hearing from other visitors of more secular but not less surprising things, at last looked his pastor in the face with lack-lustre eyes, and delivered himself of these words: —"What with justification and what with rail-roads, it's all a buzzin' and a fuzzin', and I know nothing about it." This said, he fell back and died. Probably many an old king called on to receive modern doctrines of constitutionalism and submit to the cutting up of his dominions by iron lines, would equally object to the "buzzin'" and the "fuzzin'," and be inclined to give

up the ghost. Much suffering, alas! much sorrow and crime (as Lancashire knows too well), may exist in a land whose map in Bradshaw looks like an iron cobweb. But somehow, not much regular tyranny—not corrupt judges—not unquestioned, unpunished brigandage and assassination. Railways, and trial by jury, and coroner's inquests, and large newspapers, seem to have a deep occult relationship between them. Civilisation means Roads, and Roads mean Civilisation, in the original Dictionary which existed before Johnson. And despotic governments (which at the utmost produce only veneered civilisation, not the solid article), do not like railways, however they may pretend to patronise them. Say in France, for instance. The harmless traveller, intent only on getting from Boulogne to Marseilles as fast as may be, and harbouring no regicide designs in his soul, nor contraband cigars in his portmanteau, finds himself from the moment he enters the premises of any of the various Railway Companies, in strict custody. He is not to run hither and thither after his ticket and his luggage, and rush up and down platforms and change his carriage at pleasure, and get out and

call for his luggage half way, if he so desire it. Oh dear no, nothing of the kind! Persons who are guilty of wanting to travel must be treated very differently from this. They are not (as we fondly imagine in England) the customers of the Company to be used by its servants with every attention, but, on the contrary, persons, if not actually convicted of crime, yet open to grievous suspicion—men found about unlawful business, trespassers, and probably politically disaffected individuals, who are not content to stay at home. The tenor of official behaviour towards them is necessarily regulated by this sad position in which they have so improperly placed themselves. Sometimes moved by natural clemency, a railway porter will answer them with curt dignity when meekly implored to do so, and when pretty sure of a franc or two in return; but this is an unusual case. The "Repression of Crime," as the venerable Recorder of Birmingham would say, strictly regulates the tone of French railway officials towards their passengers. We have read somewhere, how the late Emperor of China, wearied with the difficulties suscitated by the litigious propensities of his subjects, pub-

lished a Decree, wherein it was set forth that thenceforth throughout the Celestial Empire, "Whosoever shall go to law before the tribunals for any cause whatsoever, shall be treated *without any pity*." In like manner, he who desires to travel by public conveyance in France is properly felt to have put himself outside the pale of indulgence. He must come early to the station, else he cannot go at all—yet not too early, or no admission is vouchsafed. He is pushed and pinched through a species of wolf-trap up to the window, where a fearful officer of justice demands his money and his intentions, and conveys both to the inner majesty behind the scenes. He is knocked over by twenty boxes and twenty porters before his luggage is weighed, and then another officer and another hidden majesty fine him again (be his trunks of the smallest), and he is ushered into a Pen or Dock, first class, second class, or third class, as the case may be, where he is locked up in closest arrest with the other criminals of the day, probably for about half an hour. By and bye, a jailor comes to the glass door of the prison and proclaims the joyful news of relief: "Prenez

vos places." Everybody is ready to take his or her place directly; indeed, a dozen of the more hardy prisoners have been long crowded round the portal of escape, toilsomely holding up their huge cloaks, bundles, and travelling bags, and brandishing their umbrellas so as to inform the rest of the gang: "We mean to get out first and choose the best places." They do get out first, but a moment of blank bewilderment always ensues; for the train is never near the door, and generally at the other side of the vast Terminus, so that the grand *coup* which has been so dramatically managed, proves a failure. No porters are ever permitted to attend the prisoners on this occasion; but old or young, sick or strong, each must carry his or her bag, bundle, and infinite etceteras, and make his or her way to the train, across rails and down platforms, in the midst of screaming engines and shoving carriages and frightened passengers and trucks of luggage. Of course, as is right and proper, the feeblest arrive last, and vainly implore corner places. Every carriage usually must be filled to repletion; and the process of climbing up into it (about equal to that of getting on the roof of an omnibus)

performed unaided by all alike. At the end of the journey the case is pretty similar. Of course the traveller *must* go to the end he originally proposed; for heaven and earth may be moved sooner than a guard or Chef de Gare induced to allow his luggage to be taken out half-way. Arrived at the platform, say at Lyons or Marseilles, he is driven into a first Salle d'Attente, where he waits half an hour or three quarters. Then his prison is opened again, and he rushes into another salle, where he claims his *colis*, and then after infinite worry, and probably a slight scuffle with the *octroi*, is for that day set at liberty by a too indulgent government. Some people applaud all this system, and tell us of safety of limb and luggage thereby secured. I can only say the argument seems to belong to the same order as that we often hear in behalf of negro slavery. It must be so pleasant for the black man to have all care taken off his mind! What matters a little durance vile, and being treated as a chattel, and bullied by every overseer, provided you are sure of your dinner, or your bandbox?

French civilisation is despot's civilisation, almost as hollow as that which Peter and Catherine

the Great tried to introduce into Russia; and, therefore, locomotion is essentially an inimical thing, which it instinctively treats with harshness.* Real civilisation, which implies freedom and self-government, is fostered by every journey of every citizen; and, therefore, in countries where it has taken root, equally instinctively is locomotion favoured and respected.

The Italians knew all this long ago very well; and I can quite recall how in the old times, before there was much hope for Italy anywhere, wise men among them used to say, "Ah, let us only get permission to make ourselves railways, and *then!*" What times they were for travelling in Italy, those days of paternal government! There were the Inns like that at Terracina, immortalised by Washington Irving; awful dens, with huge yawning archways, and dark enormous stairs, and bad beds—worse food—the chance of a robbery, the possibility of a murder, and the certainty of unutterable vermin. One of these I remember in my first voyage to Italy striking

* For a most clever contrast of French and American legislature and society, see a recent French romance, "Paris en Amérique".

horror into my heart, and giving me the worst nightmare I ever had in my life. It was in desolate grass-grown Ferrara. I had been travelling alone, *vetturino* fashion, and reached the dismal old city late in the evening.

The broad streets (so rare in Italy), down which once used to flow such a stream of life and splendour, but which are now silent as those of a City of the Dead—the villas passed on the road for miles around, with their stone gateways all in ruins, their beautiful iron *cancelli* falling from their hinges—their broken statues and dried up fountains, and dark giant cypresses shadowing the blank house, whose windows had not been opened for a generation—all these sights impressed me sorrowfully. I needed not the view of Tasso's dungeon, or the court where Parisina's lover expiated his crime, to sadden me more. It was a dark grey cold evening—of those evenings more common in Italy than is supposed—I drove into the yard of an immense old palace, ascended the great marble stair, passed through some anterooms, and entered what had been a noble dining hall, and was still hung round with numerous full-length portraits of bygone lords of Ferrara.

Only one servant appeared. "Could I have a room for the night?" "Yes, certainly.—Would the Signora follow him?" The man took a *lucerna* (one of the old classic brass lamps still used by Italians), and went on before me. Well can I remember that walk, fagged and depressed as I was. After the second room from the dining hall, there was no pretence of furniture at all; but a series of large and lofty chambers, leading one into another, perfectly bare and empty; their marble floors and richly wrought but ruinous ceilings echoing every tread. The walls were all covered with frescoes, which the neglect of some three centuries had more than half effaced, and which looked perfectly ghastly in the imperfect light. There were hunting scenes, with the wild boar and dogs: here a battle, with dead men lying in the foreground, and horses rearing in agony. Why heads and arms and limbs appeared as they did, looking out of the obscurity and damp stains, I had no time to see. It only seemed like a most troubled evil dream. One huge red figure alone I recall, a gigantic fury of a woman with blood coloured robes; who or what she was I know not. *Seven* of these awful

chambers did my guide traverse; and then, in the last of all, accessible only through this gallery of desolation, there was another room, and in it a bed, a few chairs, and a dressing table. I was to sleep there! The reader will forgive me if I add that I sought a less terrible bower, and getting one only a little less solemn, dreamed that a certain marble angel I had seen somewhere in the day came and waltzed up the stairs and down the seven chambers, and finally waltzed off with me, like the statue in *Don Giovanni*.

These were the better sort of inns, in old times, in Italy. Then, as to carriages, when one had not unlimited time and unlimited *scudi* to throw away upon all too tempting *vetturini*, what horrors were in store in the diligences, going four miles an hour in the dust and heat of Italy, and with a full complement of Italian travellers, all ignorant of the fundamental principles of ablution. If the unhappy traveller was not prepared, moreover, to go the whole journey—perhaps of thirty, forty, or fifty hours—he might be deposited anywhere, and find it quite hopeless to wait to be taken on further for days to come. The coach days of England, in a word, were days of luxury of loco-

motion compared to these diligence days of Italy.

How was all this to be remedied, and the Steam-god (whom, most assuredly, the old Romans would have placed among the Dii Majores) introduced into Italy? Popes, Kings, and Grand-Dukes, all professed great respect for the new divinity, but somehow their worship of him never went beyond the making of a short line for royal use; and as to railways in the Patrimony of St. Peter, there seemed always to arise most unaccountable and also invincible obstacles whenever they were proposed. The number of times those blessed Roman lines have been attempted, and that some unforeseen calamity has overwhelmed them and stopped the hopes of traffic, might perhaps be quoted as one of the instances wherein the aid of celestial Saints (who perfectly understand their own interests on earth) may be presumed to have intervened to stop modern innovations. In simple truth, the difficulties were considerable. Everything—rails, engines and carriages—had to be brought from England or France; for, even now, the new god is only a Deity *in partibus* in Italy. There are no foundries for him, nor any

proper naturalisation. Italians have ceased to call a railway a "*Strada Ferrata*," a word much too long for familiar use, and always speak affectionately of the "*Ferrovia*." They pet it, and admire it, and are proud of it; and when a festa (one of Italy's eternal festas) is to be held, the railway station is instantly changed by their transcendent taste into a long Jardin d'Hiver of flowers and flags. But the traveller still recognises in his carriage the little brass or ivory *plaque* on the doorway, bearing the name of some English or French maker; and the engines with sonorous Italian names—Galileos and Garibaldis—have all issued straight from some Cyclopean forge, not in sunny Sicily, but smoke-begrimed Lancashire. Nor was it only the stock, "rolling" and quiescent (*sleepers*, at least, deserve the latter term), which the makers of the rails had to bring over. The whole idea of a navvy was necessarily a difficult importation. I have often driven among crowds of the Italian version of that thoroughly British production, and marvelled how on earth the wretched engineers got on with their task with such tools. Always half the number seemed either too weak or too lazy to roll their barrows

or use their pickaxes; and generally a detachment of women might be seen doing some of the very hardest part of the toil, with such little share of strength as they might possess.

The line between an Italian navvy and a brigand is slight, not to say evanescent. As I have learned from a French gentleman in charge of large works on the Roman territories, the robberies which were daily practised on his line were something marvellous. Casernes had to be built to shelter soldiers to superintend the men; and these casernes were stripped of their tiles, and of every removable object as fast as it was supplied. Stabbing was a common occurrence; one fellow murdering another, on one occasion, because in his sleep he had rolled over into his companion's bed, on the floor of some den they were occupying together. A man once came to M. S——, and, professing great interest in his affairs, acquainted him that he was robbed in every direction. M. S—— replied that he knew it was the case; he had tried every means to stop the evil, but found that, under the Roman government, he had no redress. "Is it possible?" said the benevolent informer. "No redress at all?"

"Too true," said the Frenchman. "Oh! then," said the other, "I see I need not be under any apprehensions"; and from that day forth he was the worst robber of the party.

Such were the mechanical and human agencies at the disposal of the Italian Government in making railways; yet, in a great measure, it has triumphed over all difficulties. The growth of steam-traffic in Italy since the Annexation would be surprising had there not been half such obstacles to encounter. In Piedmont in 1859, there were already more lines of railway open than in all the rest of Italy together; while in Naples, which had been the first to introduce them into Italy, there were only a few miles (almost exclusively of passenger service) in the whole kingdom. Between 1859 and 1864, the increase has been pretty equal over the peninsula. When the war broke out in 1859 there were only 1472 kilometres of railways in activity from north to south. Of these, 807 were in Piedmont, 200 in Lombardy, 33 in Emilia, 308 in Tuscany, and 124 in Naples. In the beginning of 1864, 3065 kilometres were at work, forming 41 different railways. This is surely a very con-

siderable step towards the free circulation of men in Italy, and consequently of the ideas they carry along with them. In the single year 1863, the following extensions and new lines were opened:

| From | To | Kilomètres. |
|---|---|---|
| Ancona | Pescara | 146 |
| Pescara | Ortona | 21 |
| Salerno | Eboli | 24 |
| Castel Bolognese | Ravenna | 42 |
| Palermo | Bagheria | 13 |
| Triviglio | Cremona | 66 |
| Massa | Sarzana | 18 |
| Leghorn | Follonica | 104 |
| Cecina | Saline | 30 |
| Florence | Montevarchi | 29 |
| Ortona | Foggia | 154 |
| Virgato | Fracchia | 33 |
| Bergamo | Lecco | 33 |
| Sarzana | Spezzia | 15 |
| Novaro | Gozzano | 37 |

The cost of the 1693 kilometres of railway made between 1859 and 1864, is between five and six hundred millions of francs. The Italian Government has now commenced the sale of these railways to private companies, thereby, as it is hoped, contributing a little to make up the tremendous deficit of the revenue.

Besides all this development of railways, and partly in consequence of it, the common roads of the country have been vastly extended and improved, especially in Naples and Sicily. Soldiers have been very judiciously set to aid this latter work, and have just opened a new road near Gar-

gano. When it is understood that throughout large districts of Calabria and the Abruzzi, there have been hitherto *no roads at all*—only rude tracks between one populous village and another, and that this state of things was especially patronised by the Bourbon Government—propositions for road making being always discountenanced—it may be judged what a task the new government has got before it. The poor Communes, accustomed only to be taxed and pillaged, do not yet understand what can be meant by affording them grants for schools and roads, and sending them able engineers to lay out public works. "What *does* the King want?" they say. "What good will it do him, our being better off?" Governments existing for the benefit of the governed, not of the governors, is a new idea in Naples.

Very curious it is to note that on these new railways in Italy (although in some degree they are planned in the French manner as regards passengers) there is never for a moment exhibited that spirit of *judicial severity* towards the culprits who travel thereon, which we have signalised as belonging to France. Trained to sub-

mission under the French prison regimen, I confess to a feeling of keen surprise when, on entering Italian *stazione*, I have found myself a free agent and treated with the usual courtesy. Nay, it must be added, that being in a bad state of health, I found such rules as there were about entering the carriages and waiting rooms, set aside for me even before I asked for the favour, and every sort of kindness proffered by all the officials. Italy is even now showing, in many a little symptom, that there is a real civilisation springing up in her such as France has never known—and never will know, so long as her idea of Order means Despotism.

The extension of *telegraphs* is only second in interest to that of railways. The following is an official summary of the works in Italy up to the beginning of the present year.

| Departmental Division. | Total Development of Wires in Kilomètres. | No. of Telegraph Offices. | Development of Wires of the Railway Companies. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bologna..... | 2,722 | 47 | 448 |
| Cagliari..... | 1,283 | 14 | |
| Cosenza..... | 1,815 | 19 | |
| Foggia ..... | 2,960 | 46 | |
| Milan..... | 2,552 | 54 | 464 |
| Naples ..... | 3,112 | 53 | 184 |
| Palermo..... | 2,616 | 44 | |
| Pisa ..... | 3,982 | 65 | |
| Turin..... | 3,862 | 86 | 268 |
| Total..... | 24,904 | 428 | 1,364 |

In the beginning of 1862 there were in all Italy only 10417 kilos. of telegraph, and the outlay of the expenses exceeded the receipts by an enormous amount. Telegraphs are not only thus doubled in extension, but rendered actually useful to the public, which they could hardly have been said to be formerly. The prices for messages were so enormous, and the transmission so slow and careless, that it was a very rare occurrence indeed which would lead any one to avail himself of the wires. It happened to me once, I remember, for example, four years ago, to need to send a message from Florence to Rome. I went to the bureau in Florence, wrote my message (which consisted of the two words, *Non venite*); and asked what I had to pay for its immediate transmission to Rome? The answer was "Forty-six pauls", equal as nearly as possible to a pound sterling. I demurred; but the tariff was there; the message urgent. The official was quite positive, if I would but pay, my friend in Rome should receive the telegram *immediately*. I did pay; but twenty-four hours elapsed before the message was delivered at the telegraph office in Rome, where it was impatiently

expected. In the spring of the present year, I repeated the experiment. The telegram cost six francs, and was received in Rome within a couple of hours.

Postal arrangements have also undergone great reforms in Italy. As in the case of railway travelling, the sending and receiving of letters is always, under a despotic government, a sort of minor offence, a sign of restlessness and dissatisfaction. Ink is a nasty fluid in the opinion of autocrats, and the less that is spilled of it the better. A little blood is not nearly so dangerous. In the good old times of Bomba and Bombalino at Naples, an assassin was sure of much more merciful judgment than a scribbler. Thus in Rome still, and in Italy generally before 1859, every sort of difficulty was prudently laid in the way of epistolary correspondence. There was one post-office (and no boxes) for each great city; a post-office closed at the most unaccountable hours, so that when the letter-seeker had taken his long walk or drive, he found nothing but a blank window. Sundays and festas (and how many days *were* festas in Italy heaven and the priests only know!) of course, there were no

posts out or in. Stamps could only be had with infinite worry and struggling at the single window whence they were supplied. Of course, all letters were liable to be opened, and were constantly stopped; and those received from abroad underwent any examination the officials pleased; newspapers were hopeless things altogether. All this is changed so far as the Kingdom of Italy is concerned, though Roman ways are very little mended, and letters still take precisely twice as long to go from Genoa to Rome as from Genoa to Naples, thanks to the admirable contrivances for delay of his Holiness' postmaster-general. Throughout Italy generally there are now abundance of offices and pillars for letters, letter-carriers, and all the proper machinery of the post. Special conveniences are even given for the transmission of local newspapers, by the issue of stamps worth only one centesimo (the fifth of a halfpenny), the general postage throughout the kingdom for letters being fifteen centesimi (a penny halfpenny). It is admitted also that persons losing letters have a right to make complaints (an immense step for Italy); and the strictest engagements are given on the part of the government

that all correspondence is sacred and free from examination. The book-post system also is particularly liberal, and much in advance of that of France, where open manuscripts are not available; insomuch that I have transmitted from Italy to England for two francs a manuscript twice as large as one which cost me sixteen francs to send thither from France.

But there is room for much improvement still in the Italian post-office. As letters and papers multiply by thousands, it is quite clear that their proper distribution becomes a problem which would be fearfully harassing to the Italian soul, if the Italian soul allowed itself to be harassed by its proper business. Troublesome *Forestieri*, whose names, of course, are utterly unreadable, and which, indeed, nobody ever attempts to read; and which sound as if they began with a K when they actually do so with a C, and with that ridiculous English Th when they seem like D,—these wretched people are sad plagues in Florence, and Naples, and Genoa, and everywhere. They are always asking for letters—three times a day—though the post comes in but once; and when they do not get them, they make a noise, and

stand at the window, and insist on having all the office searched; and then when it happens (as, of course, in the best regulated post-office it may easily do) that three or four of their tiresome banker's letters and other things are found in a different compartment, where they have been a few weeks, they go away abusing the office, instead of being grateful for getting them at last, and saying "Grazie tanto," as any well-bred person would do. I was stopping this winter in the same hotel with a statesman of eminence, who confided to the table-d'hôte that all his newspapers for three weeks had been stopped at the next post-office. A chorus of lamentations over other lost property echoed his plaints, enforced by various histories of appeals to Direttori, merely handed over to delinquent clerks, and (as in my own case) only rendering those clerks less civil and more inattentive than before. The Marchese wrote to the prefect, who wrote to some ministero at Turin, whence came awful fulminations, and as their consequence, a pile of journals and packets which (not to exaggerate) formed a heap some two feet high.

Shrewd surmises are entertained that some of

the losses of letters throughout the continent are traceable to another source beside the stupidity of clerks. If there be an argument to be found anywhere for the existence in human nature of Acquisitiveness, *pur et simple*, without any imaginable good to be derived from the object acquired, it is assuredly to be found in the new mania for collecting Postage Stamps. One of the Albums brought into existence by this popular delusion is a sort of Machine for the Promotion of Irrational Covetousness; a perpetual suggestion of wants which are no wants, and of desirable acquisitions which are not desirable. Of the eighteen periodicals said to be published for the benefit of stamp collectors, the shops in all the great towns which traffic in old stamps, the immense expenditure of time and correspondence, not to say money, which this mania has cost, there is no need to tell. It is rather desirable, however, to be forewarned that a rare American or Greek stamp on your letter will probably insure it being stopped in the post office, and that Messrs. W. H. Smith's pretty round green and purple labels form temptations which your number of the *Reader* or *Spectator* is very little likely to

survive. I have known letter carriers in Italy actually write to my servant, after I had left a town, imploring the return of any which might come to me through other channels. Report says that the wives of certain Directors in Italy have the richest Albums in Europe. The knowledge of the fact would be infinitely consolatory, no doubt, to those who have endured agonies of suspense from the cessation of their correspondence with absent relatives. I knew one lady, whose husband was in America last winter, and about whom she naturally felt great anxiety. He wrote, as it proved, every mail, but for six weeks she never received a letter. The stamps he used were probably peculiarly rare and valuable. Truly, Sir Rowland Hill's magnificent inventions ought not to be turned into playthings! These malversations are, however, always now the fault of individual officials in Italy. The Government may not yet have organised all its bureaux as perfectly as should be done; but there is the immense difference from the old state of things, that it always honestly desires to do so. Nobody doubts this; nobody supposes for a moment that the king or his ministers would prefer an ill-

regulated post office to a good one. And nobody has the slightest doubt that the Pope and Antonelli now, and all the old kings and grand-dukes heretofore, did very much prefer delays, mistakes, and every sort of difficulty and confusion, to the facilitation of that evil and revolutionary thing—epistolary correspondence.

## CHAPTER III.

### ITALY SENT TO SCHOOL.

THE distinguishing feature of our modern civilisation, as opposed to that of the classic nations, is undoubtedly its *width*. They reached as high in many things; a great deal higher in all artistic things, than we; but their elevation was that of an Obelisk—ours of a Pyramid. A few dozen, a few hundred, at the most a few thousand men, in the old times, monopolised all the knowledge, the refinement, the liberty of the world; the millions were left advisedly to uttermost ignorance, slavery, and barbarism. Those who rose highest sought least to draw their brothers along with them. They were content, in a word, that their civilisation should rest on the narrowest possible basis, and the natural results followed, that that grand and beautiful civilisation, with all its glories of art and wisdom,

was utterly overthrown, and we are left to dig for its sculptured relics beneath the sands of the ages. The Hun and the Vandal avenged the Slave and the Helot. But our civilisation—inferior æsthetically, superior morally and scientifically, to theirs—is essentially broad-based, and tending continually to spread itself over a wider surface. The printing-press as a material agent, a totally new conception of human brotherhood and human solidarity as a spiritual one, have between them changed the whole form of our edifice. We are as anxious to educate our artisans and labourers, and to spread knowledge, refinement of manners—even artistic taste—through our millions, as the old Greek or Roman was indifferent, or even adverse to such a course. *He* said, "*Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*" *We* are not content if every cobbler does not go a very great way indeed further than his last! It is in this far larger foundation—a foundation we hope in time to make wide as the whole human race, that lies the promise that modern civilisation will never be overthrown like the old, but shall continue to grow higher and more beautiful while the world endures. So long as we are

true to its laws of building, and for every stone we add to its height add as much to the base and the sides, there is little fear for our pyramid.

It is common to attribute this difference between the ancient and modern world to the influence of Christianity. Assuredly that great transition in human nature, which we are accustomed somewhat vaguely to define as the Christian movement, has been at work in teaching us at last that sense of the brotherhood of man to which it is due; but it has been pretty nearly eighteen centuries in conveying the lesson. In the Middle Ages, and down to a hundred years ago, learned men recorded their discoveries, first, in a manner designed especially to *prevent* the "vulgar" from understanding them, and afterwards in ways which they never cared whether they did or did not so comprehend. Statesmen endeavoured from Alfred's time to diffuse education among the middle classes, but hardly among the actual working ones in any country in Europe. Even to this very hour the idea, that a man is to be instructed, refined, elevated *as a man*, as well as a bricklayer or blacksmith, does not seem quite a truism any-

where save in America! When Petrarch was polishing his sonnets, Galileo discovering worlds, Titian touching his pictures, and Michael Angelo delivering imprisoned angels out of blocks of marble—in Italy's Golden Age of Art, Literature, and Science—Civilisation went below the surface as deep as the ice which now and then thinly skins over the Tiber. The ice of Cinque Cento civilisation broke up ere long, and the thick muddy stream, laden with impurities, rolled on as before. Things did not mend when Art went down. The improvement of the people, the repression of mendicancy, the encouragement of labour, the advance of agriculture and manufacture, the education of the working classes—these were the very last things which Bomba and his allies were likely to think about. On the contrary, some universities were closed because the students were troublesome, other schools were suffered (especially in Naples) to die for want of funds, and such as remained were placed in the hands of the Jesuits. There was no sign that Pope, or king, or duke, would take a step in the direction of widening the base of the pyramid.

The new government of Italy could not have given better proof of the thoroughness of the reformation it means to accomplish, than by the energy with which it has set about educating the whole nation, from the well-born youths in the universities, to the peasants in the fields; from the adult artisan, who comes from his workshop to find a night-school waiting for him, to the babe of three summers who is left daily by its mother in the Asilo Infantile to begin its study of the alphabet. A government which intended only political aggrandisement or political reforms—which aimed at sudden triumph for a party or a dynasty, would have put off popular education as a thing to be attended to when its primary purposes were all fulfilled. At the very utmost there would have been a show of encouraging the schools, producing most rapid results—the universities and scientific lectures. But the actual existing Italian government has done the reverse of all this. The Army itself, on which the whole unity of the kingdom depends, has not taken a more prominent place in its care. The schools which have received its greatest attention have been those for the instruction of

the very humblest classes, and Normal Schools for the training of teachers, male and female, whose work cannot tell on the population for another generation. A government which has done this, and in doing it has but followed the unanimous desire of the nation, is no revolutionary junta. It is laying deep and wide the foundations of an enduring civilisation such as the old despotisms never knew.

The Catholic Church has often ostentatiously patronised education. It has founded abundance of Colleges for the Clergy, and some for the laity. It has sanctioned Orders devoted to the instruction of the young. It claims not unfairly to have been the grand depository of learning during the middle Ages. The chestnuts of Vallombrosa shaded Galileo in his youth, though the dungeons of the Inquisition shrouded his old age. Catholics, as a rule, would vehemently repudiate the accusation that their system was inimical to the highest and widest education. M. de Broglie and Count Montalembert tell us that Oscurantism is no part of Romanism; that it has been by a grievous mistake and baneful error it has ever been identified with it or favoured by its chiefs;

and, in a word, that Rome is the seven-fold Candlestick which lights the Christian world. This is the theory of the case. Practically, however, by some fatality or other, it happens that the proceedings of the Church in the matter of Education are either so unlucky or so ill-advised, that they always result in fostering ignorance even when they seem to be most ardent in disseminating instruction.

The Catholic countries of Europe and America, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Catholic Germany and Switzerland, Mexico, the Southern Republics, and Brazil, are certainly not *quite* on the same educational level as England, Scotland, North Germany, Holland, Scandinavia, and the United States and Canada. France alone stands forward as a highly instructed Catholic country: but is it to the Church or to the Government we owe its communal schools? Are its men of letters and science supposed to be faithful disciples of any Christian Church? If Rome has really been working all these ages with her immense machinery and profound sagacity to accomplish the education of her children, it must be admitted her success has not been as decided as might have been wished.

It happened to me to open for three successive years, in an Irish village, night schools, where boys and girls received instruction in Arithmetic, Geography, and such matters. No religious teaching of any kind was given, nor any suspicion breathed of tampering with the opinions of the scholars. Each year it also happened, that as soon as my schools were opened, the priest of the parish (professing profound respect and gratitude to me and my family) proceeded to open other night schools of his own, and to order all my Catholic pupils to transfer their attendance to the same. When I had acquiesced in this arrangement, contented that education should be given, no matter by whom, or where, and consequently closed my own school, it also *happened* (of course quite fortuitously, but still singularly regularly for three consecutive years) that the priest next week closed *his* schools also, and there was an end of education for that winter among the lads and lasses of the village. This is a very small incident, not worth recording; but I cannot help fancying it affords a miniature view of a policy which has prevailed to no small extent over Catholic Christendom. When any people insist on being educated, or when Protestants

are ready to step in and educate them, then the Church pushes in with immense bustle and dignity: "Leave it all to me. I will do everything. It is my right and my privilege, and here are my Jesuits and my Nuns of the Bon Pasteur, and of St. Joseph, all ready to teach everybody everything under the sun." But, by and bye, when the ardour of the people sinks a little, and Protestants have turned to something else, the energy of Mother Church relaxes, and the work is left pretty much where it was. A miserable little *gamin* in one of our great towns is left to run about the streets untaught, to beg or steal, till a Protestant magistrate or philanthropist seizes on him and shuts him up in an Industrial School, and then out comes the priest in tremendous anxiety for his soul: "He is one of my flock; give him up at once." In like manner, countries of Catholics, like Naples and Ireland, are left in uttermost ignorance and stupidity so long as nobody interferes; but when the nation rises with new-gained freedom, or Protestant England appoints National Schools, there is an outcry: "Here we are, Jesuits and Nuns by scores. We will be the teachers every-

where. Give the children up to our care." The experiment has been tried on too vast a scale to leave much room for dispute. Which are the most *ignorant* countries of Europe? The Two Sicilies, Ireland, Spain. Which are the most *Catholic* countries? The Two Sicilies, Ireland, Spain. There are no other answers; and till the Romish Church can produce some other, it is surely vain to pretend she ever sincerely labours for the education of her disciples. During the old regime in Italy, it was the rule to endeavour to engage all promising young students in the colleges to devote themselves to the Church. If they declined the lures and bribes presented to them, their further education was pretty well stopped. Every sort of discouragement was thrown in the way of their applications: their teachers visibly lost all interest in their progress, and rendered their attendance at their classes as difficult and disagreeable as possible. On the other hand, if they fell in with the wishes of their ecclesiastical tutors, they were placed under a system calculated with nicety to efface in them all natural feelings, to blind them to all modern light, and to saturate them with the ideas and prejudices of their Church. A young student of

Divinity of this class furnished a friend with a minute account of his education on this plan. The course lasts for eleven years, beginning at twelve and ending at twenty-three. Ten weeks' holiday are allowed in the autumn of each year. While in the *Seminario*, the pupils pray and study, and meditate, alternately, during the entire day, from five A.M. till night, with the exception of meals, and one hour's relaxation for conversation, of which *half an hour* is allotted to exercise! The condition of a young man's mind and body, who from boyhood has had only an hour's amusement and thirty minutes of exercise (such exercise as can be taken by a school of boys walking two by two in long trailing robes) may be imagined. The hapless young men, who have passed through such a dreary youth, and emerge from it with their minds loaded only with false philosophy, false science, false morals, utterly false views of life, and all its most sacred relations, are surely greatly to be pitied. If they, in their turn, darken other minds, and prove bigots and fanatics, or depraved debauchees, is it any great wonder? Would it be more than human nature avenging herself for her wrongs? Let us turn to a happier picture.

Before the annexation of the other provinces, Piedmont was vastly in advance of the rest of Italy in Education. One in ten out of the entire population attended the schools, while in Naples not one in ninety did so; and in Sicily, out of the female population, even at present, not one in two hundred. The very first care of the Government, as province after province has been joined to form the Kingdom of Italy, has been to reform the system of education, to open schools for both boys and girls in every commune, to train teachers who shall hereafter take the place of the very poor lay instructors, and the very dangerous ecclesiastical ones, who have hitherto shared the education of Italy between them. The task was Herculean; but the whole nation has joined in it heart and hand, and the result is something amazing to any one who knows the difficulties in the way.

We shall endeavour to give a brief sketch of what has been done in each of the four great departments, namely—I. The UNIVERSITIES, for completing the education of youths of the higher classes. II. NORMAL SCHOOLS, for the training of teachers, male and female, intended for the Elementary

Schools. III. ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, Upper and Lower, for the gratuitous education of all children, boys and girls, from eight years old upward. IV. The ASILI INFANTILI, or Infant Schools for the youngest children, also gratuitous. There are also a number of Adult Schools in different towns. The information I offer may be relied on as accurate, the greater part of it having been derived directly from the Ministero dell' Istruzione at Turin, and the rest from a source perfectly secure.

I. The UNIVERSITIES of Italy are somewhat troublesome problems to the Government. There have been nineteen of them from a remote period, and it is clear enough that, to supply nineteen Universities with first-rate Professors to fill all the chairs of classics and science, is a matter which no country except Germany would find it possible to accomplish. The number of the students in many of them being small (eight of them have less than a hundred, and three less than fifty), these first-class Professors must necessarily have their Chairs almost wholly endowed by Government. Nevertheless, the obvious plan of reducing Italy's nineteen Universities to Eng-

land's three, is an undertaking at present impracticable. In each of the nineteen towns the University, small or great, is a matter alike of pride and profit to the inhabitants, and its removal would be a cause of public discontent. The various Provinces have given up their independent Courts and local governments for the national good, but the loss of their Universities they never contemplated, and to force them to undergo it would be, to say the least, an ungracious task on the part of Turin. Another proposition has been made, which seems more possible of fulfilment just now. It is to apportion the different professional and other studies among different Universities, so as to have one for Medical Students, one for Law, one for Classical, one for Mathematical, one for Natural Science. The best Professor in each line might thus be appointed to the Chair he could best fill, and where all students seeking his special instructions would naturally be educated. Even such a plan, however, would entail many difficulties in the transposal of existing Chairs, and the filling up of those which in each University, although made of secondary importance,

could not be left empty where the entire education of young men was to be carried through. Heartburn is a common disease, alas! in such places all the world over. But it seems to be endemic everywhere in Italy. University Reform would bring on a perfect outbreak of it in the nineteen towns.

The following is a list of the existing Universities, with the number of their scholars during the past year.

| | Students. |
|---|---|
| Pavia | 1131 |
| Turin | 879 |
| Pisa | 568 |
| Palermo | 561 |
| Bologna | 454 |
| Modena | 398 |
| Parma | 268 |
| Catania | 213 |
| Genoa | 197 |
| Siena | 120 |
| Perugia | 99 |
| Ferrara | 97 |
| Messina | 64 |
| Cagliari | 63 |
| Urbino | 61 |
| Sassari | 39 |
| Camerino | 39 |
| Macerata | 31 |
| Naples | 2 |
| Total | 5,270 |

In Naples, in 1861-2, there were 1459 students inscribed, making it the largest University in the kingdom. The downfall of the numbers in 1862-3 depends upon a question of taxes, which the students resented as too high. I am not aware of the exact figures for the present year, but understand that a compromise has been effected, and the University is again filling with students.

The education given in these Universities has not undergone any important change during the formation of the new Kingdom. In addition to them there are throughout Italy various institutions for the higher class of instructions, lyceums and *scuole tecniche*, of which I have some Reports, testifying to courses of lectures on Political Economy, Chemistry, Naval Architecture, Physical Science, etc.

II. The NORMAL Schools, for the training of schoolmasters and mistresses for the Elementary Schools. These were decidedly among the most interesting and important of all the new institutions in Italy, and prove, by their long-sighted policy, how deep and complete is the reform contemplated by the Government. Till of late

years, nearly the whole educational system of Italy was in the hands of the Church, and so long as this state of things continued, it was hopeless to expect the youth of the country to grow up with liberal opinions. Yet to alter the system at once was impossible, seeing that the class of lay teachers, so common elsewhere, had been effectually excluded from Italy. Even last year it was found that, out of 14,253 masters of Elementary Schools, 6,378 were ecclesiastics, and out of 7,604 mistresses, 1,106 were nuns, the authorities having been as yet unable to fill up the number with lay teachers. In the present state of things, however, all teachers, whether lay or ecclesiastical, are appointed by, and solely dependant on the civil authority of the Commune where they are employed, and are responsible (so far as their office is concerned) to no ecclesiastical superiors.

There are now existing in Italy Twenty-One Normal Schools for training Schoolmasters, viz., in Aquila, Ascoli, Bari, Casale, Cosenza, Crema, Florence, Forli, Lodi, Messina, Naples, Novara, Oneglia, Palermo, Perugia, Pinerolo, Pisa, Reggio (in Emilia), Sassari, Treviglio, and Urbino.

There are also Eighteen Normal Schools for training Schoolmistresses, namely, at Alessandria, Ancona, Bologna, Brescia, Cagliari, Camerino, Catania, Como, Florence, Genoa, Girgenti, Lucco, Milan, Mondovi, Naples, Parma, Perugia, and Vercelli. The Masters' Schools contain 901 pupils; the Mistresses', 1637. Each pupil receives an annual pension of 250 francs.

Previous to 1859, in the place of these Normal Schools, there existed in the Sardinian States (where lay-teaching was encouraged by the Government in spite of the Church), some ten *Scuole Magistrale* for the training of masters and thirty for mistresses. These are still maintained. The instruction in them is of the same sort, but somewhat inferior to that afforded in the new *Scuole Normale*. They help to increase the number of teachers produced by the latter, which still are inadequate in numbers to the demand.

In each Normal School are three Professors, with salaries respectively of 2200 francs, 1800 francs, and 1500 francs. In each Female Normal School there is an additional mistress, charged with the moral care of the pupils. The course of instruction in Male and Female Schools is the

same, except that the young men only are taught gymnastics and military exercises, and the women needlework.

This course of instruction is as follows:—

1. Religion and Morals.
2. *Pedagogia*; or, the Art of Instruction.
3. Italian Language and Rules of Composition.
4. Geography and Natural History.
5. Arithmetic and the Elements of Geometry.
6. The Principles of Physical Science and Elements of Hygienics.
7. Caligraphy.
8. Drawing.
9. Choral Singing.

I have read very carefully the official programmes of examination, published for the use of all the Normal Schools in the kingdom. They are in many respects remarkable. "Religion" is defined to consist in "The catechism of the Diocese, and the story of the Old and New Testaments in two Books, approved for questioning children." Everybody knows what affairs are these Catholic stories of the Testaments — the miracles all kept in, and the sense all kept out. But it is perfectly comprehensible that the theology of these

schools should be of the briefest. "Morals" are developed much further, and truly the way in which they are handled is more suggestive of the Middle Ages than of the century after Kant. First, we find the Science analysed, beginning from "Definition and Division of Ethics," and a discussion on "Free Will" (all accomplished on scholastic principles), to the apparition of those long departed virgins whom we have not heard of except on allegorical tomb-stones for several generations —the Cardinal Virtues, Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude. On reading of these poor neglected ladies, introduced as still alive and influential, the mind naturally reverts to those other four characters likewise too long forgotten, the Four Elements, from which one of the Fathers demonstrated that there only were, and only could be, four gospels. The Physics of the Italian schools are, however, fortunately much in advance of their Ethics. The third year of Moral instruction takes the pupils into Politics, beginning with proof that the social state is necessary to mankind, and proceeding to an analysis of the civil and political rights recognised in Italy, the constitution of the Monarchy, and the duties of

citizens of free States. The books for students preparing for examination in Moral Science are, Cicero's *Offices;* the *Doveri degli Uomini*, by Silvio Pellico; and four other modern Italian works, including the *Libro del Popolo* of Professor Scavia. The two greatest Italian moralists, old Beccaria and Mazzini, are not included in the list; but it must be granted that it is nevertheless an incalculable advance over the infamous books of Casuisty and Guides to the Confessional, which have hitherto represented ethical science to the youth of Italy.

After Religion and Morals come Grammar, the Elements of Literature, and the History of Italy, the latter including accounts of Dante, Michael Angelo, and Galileo, no less than of political personages.

Geography is made to include notices of the various religions of the world and statistics of the population, military force, etc., of Italy.

Arithmetic advances no further than to the Rule of Three, and the reduction of the old weights and measures into the new decimal system. Also the art of Book-keeping. Geometry is the most marvellous part of the course. We

have been accustomed from the days of Alexander to believe that there was no "Royal Road" to the science; but apparently young Italy has found that secret path, for the pupils of the Normal Schools are expected, without passing through such humdrum ways as Euclid or Archimedes, to arrive, in some miraculous manner, at "problems and applications" which are to measure the superficies and solid contents of polyhedrons and pyramids, cones, cylinders, and spheres.

Drawing includes sketches of geometric figures and objects, of furniture, and also the manner of teaching the science to the pupils in the elementary schools. Evidently, it is not as a Fine Art, but as a useful assistance in study and trade, that such instruction is given. Italians, from the highest to the lowest, have a profound reverence for real Art, and no notion of arriving at it by any Royal Road, whatever they might imagine possible as to Geometry.

Physics seem to form the most important part of the whole programme. Beginning with the Solar System, the course proceeds through forty heads, inclusive of Chemistry, Optics, Acoustics, Mineralogy, Botany, Physiology, Zoology, and

Geology, and concludes with practical instructions on Hygienics. For the use of the Professors of this favourite department, a small cabinet of objects with illustrative diagrams, is required in each school. Curiously enough, in this department, and this alone, the instruction of the Female pupils is ordered differently (though not essentially so) from that of the young men.

The whole course concludes with the *Pedagogia*, or Art of Teaching, which is to be the profession of the students.

This long analysis of the course of studies at the Normal Schools of Italy, though somewhat tedious, is, I think, not without interest, as showing at how high a mark the government aims for the future teachers of the nation. In reading over the formidable programme signed by De Sanctis, I have been tempted to wonder how far our well-assured English Certified Teachers would stand such examinations, and also how far such a Circle of the Sciences is really compassed by the young lads and damsels who frequent the Normal Schools of Italy.

The *Scuole Magistrale*, which we have spoken of as the imperfect forerunners of the *Scuole*

*Normale* in Piedmont and Liguria, a few of which are still maintained on the old footing, are so far inferior to the Normal Schools that their courses of instruction only include religion, the Italian language, arithmetic, pedagogy, and writing. Model Schools are not in use anywhere in Italy. The pupils in the Scuole Normale and Magistrale either practise teaching by attending the Elementary Schools in their neighbourhood, or have children from these schools brought to them in their own schools for instruction.*

III. The ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. These are the great glory of the new Government, the institutions which, had it done nothing else but establish throughout the land, it would still have claim to universal honour. The following is an accurate table of these Schools, derived from the Ministero at Turin :—

* Since writing the above, I have been favoured by J. D. Morell, Esq., one of H.M.S. Inspectors of Schools, with the results of his late examination into the actual state of Italian schools. He is of opinion that, as regards the courses of instruction, the Government plan is as yet but imperfectly carried out, except in a few schools in Piedmont. The rapid increase in numbers of schools and scholars throughout Italy, compels for the present a hasty transference of teachers to the Elementary schools from the Scuole Normale.

| Provinces. | Population. | Communes in each Province. | Communes having Schools. | Masters. | Mistresses. | Boys. | Girls. | Total Pupils. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Piedmont | 2,742,163 | 1,475 | 1,460 | 3,987 | 2,642 | 133,430 | 106,898 | 240,328 |
| Liguria | 764,400 | 324 | 322 | 989 | 443 | 27,051 | 16,769 | 43,820 |
| Lombardy | 3,026,533 | 2,267 | 2,186 | 3,654 | 2,401 | 128,300 | 118,590 | 246,890 |
| Emilia | 2,127,105 | 368 | 359 | 1,287 | 428 | 40,138 | 25,007 | 65,145 |
| Tuscany | 1,815,243 | 250 | 212 | 575 | 192 | 16,837 | 14,260 | 31,412 |
| Umbria and Marches | 1,395,797 | 462 | 443 | 819 | 293 | 18,477 | 12,935 | 31,412 |
| Naples | 7,060,618 | 1,850 | 1,755 | 1,850 | 867 | 70,103 | 35,425 | 105,528 |
| Sicily | 2,223,476 | 362 | 292 | 669 | 163 | 154,468 | 5,120 | 20,588 |
| Sardinia | 573,113 | 372 | 361 | 423 | 175 | 2,469 | 6,925 | 16,344 |
| Total | 21,728,448 | 7,730 | 7,390 | 14,253 | 7,604 | 452,273 | 341,929 | 801,152 |

Analysing this table, we find that the total of teachers, male and female, amounts to 21,857. The number of pupils, male and female, to 801,152, or about one teacher to forty pupils. The number of schools, I learn from another authority, is—for boys 13,394, and for girls 7,862; total, 21,256. Thus, there is a proportion of nearly three schools to each Commune, *i. e.*, about two schools for boys, and one for girls; and there are only 340 Communes among the 7,730 of all Italy, as yet, unprovided with schools. Of these last, half (as might be expected) are in Naples and Sicily. Doubtless the defect will shortly be remedied. The total number of pupils in the elementary schools, viz., 801,152, forms about a twenty-fifth of the whole population. It will be observed that the proportion of pupils to the population differs widely, however, in the different provinces. In Piedmont and Liguria there are 280,000 children at school out of a population of three and a half millions, almost one scholar to eleven of the population. In Naples and Sicily there are only 126,000 out of nine millions, or only one in seventy-five. In Sicily, out of a million of females, only 5,120 are at school, or one in two hundred.

The Elementary Schools of Italy are divided into Higher and Lower. There are for boys 826 Higher, and 12,568 Lower Schools; and for girls there are 270 Higher, and 7,592 Lower ones.

The course of education in the Lower Schools lasts for two years, and includes catechism, sacred history, reading, writing, Italian grammar, arithmetic. The course of the Upper Schools also lasts two years, and carries on the instruction given in the Lower, with the addition of composition, geometry, geography, and physics, including natural history. In the girls' schools needlework is also taught to the pupils.

With very few exceptions, all the masters and mistresses in these schools receive their salaries from the Communes to which they belong, and by whose authorities they are appointed. The law requires the Communes to provide gratuitous instruction for both boys and girls; and when any Commune is too poor to support such a burden, the government grants subsidiary assistance. The government budget for 1863 bore the sum of 2,317,472 francs for this and other educational purposes. Nearly one hundred thousand pounds

is a liberal grant, assuredly, from a young nation struggling for its life; yet, alas! small enough beside the £15,000,000 for the army! There are Inspectors in each province, appointed to ascertain and report on the carrying out of the law regarding the schools in each Commune. The instruction given to the pupils in the Elementary Schools, both Higher and Lower, throughout Italy, is entirely gratuitous.

IV. The ASILI INFANTILI, or Infant Schools, are the last branch of the Italian system of education. They are gratuitous, like the Elementary Schools, for which they are intended as preparatory. The teachers are young women, and much want is felt of training schools, to instruct them in their special tasks. The children of both sexes are mixed in these only of Italian schools, and only in the kingdom of Italy itself. In Rome, I have visited a very interesting little Infant School, supported by some benevolent gentlemen; and, on inquiring whether little girls might not be permitted to avail themselves of its benefits, I was told that the Papal government would at once close the establishment if so desperate and immoral an innovation were attempted as

that of mixing little girls from three to seven with little boys of the same perilous age!

On examining a carefully prepared MS. table of the Infant Schools in Genoa, kindly ordered by the Marchesa Doria, one of their chief patronesses, I find that there are in the town four Infant Schools, with twelve teachers and fourteen assistants, and 1,100 pupils, 556 of the number being boys. In the beginning of 1863, 243 children passed from these schools into the Elementary Schools, of whom 90 could read in syllables, and 151 in the first reading book; 209 could write, and 95 could perform the rudimentary processes of arithmetic.

Besides all these Schools, Normal, Elementary, and Infant, there are also adult evening schools opened in many towns for men. In the Genoese district there are no less than thirty-two such schools, with forty-six teachers, and about two thousand pupils. The expenditure for all these classes of education has certainly been made by the nation in a most liberal spirit. In Genoa, where the Report of the Communal Council of the *Assessori Deputati all' Istruzione* has been made with unusual exactitude, we find that in the

past year the cost of the whole has been 346,490 francs, having risen gradually, year by year, since 1849, when it only amounted to 86,479 francs.

It will be conceded, I think, after reading the above account, that, at this Labour of Hercules of educating a whole nation, the Government of the new Kingdom is working "with a will". The results will doubtless appear in good time, in a generation of men and women qualified to establish on the broadest basis the true freedom and true civilisation of Italy.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ITALY GOES TO DRILL.

AMONG the many vast undertakings incident to the formation of a New Kingdom, ambitious of taking a place among the great Powers of Europe, one of the most important to Italy has been the formation of a large and well-disciplined Army. In other countries the mere support, and occasional enlargement, of such an army is itself an immense charge on the nation; but here the whole work had to be done almost *ab ovo*. The Piedmontese Army, amounting before 1859 to only 49,000 men, formed hardly more than a nucleus for the huge agglomeration which was designed—an agglomeration, moreover, of most heterogeneous elements, and offering in its varied nationalities a variety of difficulties ere it could be made an efficient military body. When it is stated that the Army of Italy

is intended to reach, and already nearly reaches, the enormous figure of 400,000 men, it may be conceived what has been the labour and cost of its construction. The crown of Great Britain and Ireland, "with its dependencies in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Oceania," *i.e.*, with the sway over the fifth of the human race, is content with 157,000 British, and 173,000 Indian and Colonial troops. But the small kingdom of Italy, with no dependencies anywhere, and a population less by four millions than that of Great Britain alone, proposes to raise for itself the stupendous force of 400,000 men.

A sketch of this vast number, partly derived from the *Report of the Commission of* 1863 *to the Camera dei Deputati,* and partly from other sources, can hardly fail to be of some interest:— The Italian Army has three parts: 1. the Peace Establishment; 2. the War Establishment; 3. the Reserve. The manner in which these bodies are formed is as follows: each year the levies of the Conscription raise 45,000 men, in what is called the first category; each man is bound to serve for eleven years, the first five in active service, the succeeding six in *congedo illimitato,*

*i.e.*, dismissed, but required to return to service in case of war. The levies of each year form separate classes. Thus, a soldier in his first year of service is in the first class; in the next year in the second, and so on. The whole Peace establishment of course includes the five classes in their first five years of service, and the War establishment all the eleven classes raised in the preceding eleven years.

The Reserve consists of men drawn in a second category, who are only bound to undergo forty days' instruction in military drill, and are then released to continue their civil life, subject only to be called out at any time during the ensuing five years for active service by the Minister of War in case of necessity. This Reserve is also divided into five classes, according to the date of conscription.

The whole army is formed into twenty-one divisions, consisting each of a certain number of regiments, according to the nature of the service—Infantry, Artillery, and so on. Each regiment is divided into battalions, and each battalion into companies, with a fixed number of men and officers in each—one number for the

Peace establishment, and about double as many for that of War. These form what the Italians call the "*Quadro,*" or frame-work of the army, into which men are drafted with facility, without the difficult arrangement of wholly new regiments or battalions. The numbers in an Italian regiment are nearly double those in an English one. In the Italian infantry of the line, for example, a regiment is composed of sixteen active Companies and one at the Depôt. Each Company on the Peace Establishment contains 90 rank and file, and on the War Establishment 180. Thus, including officers, the total force of each regiment in peace is 1691 men, and in war 3269. In the English army, I believe, few regiments exceed 1000 men, the 109 Regiments of Infantry only numbering together (including non-combatants) 128,607.

It is needful to remark that this division of the Peace and War Establishments of Italy is rather theoretical than practical. The actual state of things in the kingdom is one midway between a peace and war establishment. What the charge of supporting such a large force must be on the nation, and how natural it is for it to

be impatient to put an end to the doubtful state of affairs which necessitates such expenditure, may be easily conceived. Each soldier is calculated (in the Official Report above mentioned) to cost the State per annum 1000 francs; and the difference made in the Army estimates by the extra day in the present bissextile year, was no less than 360,000 francs. As each month the number of soldiers actually on service is increasing in Italy, every Report must be a little behindhand before we can obtain it. From the Report, however, before-mentioned the following extract of figures may be of some interest:—

Total of 84 Regiments of Infantry, according to the Bilancio of 1863: on the Peace Establishment, 142,044; on that of War, 274,576; actually in service, 145,746 soldiers, and 7802 officers. Total of Bersaglieri: Peace, 19,121; War, 30,555; actual service 19,481. Total of Cavalry: Peace, 19,122; War, 24,721; actually in service, 16,051. Total of Artillery: Peace, 17,900; War, 30,703; actually in service, 25,913. Engineers: Peace, 3996; War, 6224; actually in service, 5460. Carbineers: Peace, 18,516; War, 18,516; actually, 16,363. To these are added

some other corps of *Cacciatori franchi, Treno, Stato Maggiore,* &c., making a grand total of the whole army, for Peace, 233,904; for War, 408,005; and in actual service, October 1863, 284,897. By the spring of 1864 these numbers in actual service have reached 383,000, and will probably before the end of the year exceed 400,000.*

The history of the growth of this great Army of Italy is not devoid of interest. Even all the haste and vast expenditure with which it has been formed would have been of little avail had it not possessed in the old Piedmontese army a nucleus round which the forces of the annexed provinces and the new levies of the past three years could gather with singular advantage. The Sub-Alpine kingdom, since the Middle Ages, has been warlike; the House of Savoy a race of soldiers who boasted of having as many warriors as subjects. When Napoleon I conquered Italy,

* The English Army consists (1862-1863) of Infantry, 128,607; Cavalry, 19,125; Artillery, 30,708; Engineers, 5,089; Baggage, 1,828; Commissariat, 2,949; Depôts, 25,481; Colonial Regiments, 7,100; Indian Regiments, 141,183; Reserve of Pensioners, 14,257; Militia (121 Regiments of Infantry), 64,889, Cavalry, 15,596; Volunteers, 163,594. Total of Volunteers and Militia, 244,079. Total of all, 672,314.

he fully understood the value of the Piedmontese army, which he rallied to his standard; and which through all his subsequent campaigns fought gallantly, even to the final overthrow of Waterloo. The experience of military affairs thus gained was never lost; and after their return to Piedmont, the troops remained among the best disciplined in Europe. Genoa being added to their possessions in 1815, the House of Savoy gradually increased in prosperity. Charles Albert, the cruelly-misnamed *Rè Traditore,* did his utmost to develope its military resources; and finally, General La Marmora introduced, throughout the whole army, the latest improvements of European military science. When the Crimean War began, Sardinia sent her contingent of 15,000 men to aid the Western Powers, guided by the far-sighted policy of Cavour, who knew that he thereby laid the first stone of the edifice of an Italian Kingdom. A nation which, without private interest of its own, had given such aid in the great war, and whose troops had proved themselves the equals of those of France and England, could not afterwards be denied a voice in the councils of Europe. Accordingly, at the ensuing Peace

Congress of Paris, Cavour was enabled to effect the step whose importance all politicians appreciated at its full value. The ITÁLIAN QUESTION then and there took shape. It was, in the French phrase, *posée* before Europe. Henceforth it was an admitted fact that there was something to be settled in Italy—a problem whose solution was to be found. Thus, had Cavour accomplished nothing further, he would by his sagacious act of sending La Marmora to the Crimea, have opened the way for all that was to follow.

In 1859, Austria, tired of seeing Sardinia daily increase her forces, and cognisant of the existence of a treaty between Napoleon and Cavour, at Plombières, thought fit to strike the first blow herself in the irrepressible conflict. Giulai crossed the Ticino, and invaded the territories of her enemy. At that time the army of Sardinia amounted in all to 94,687 men, including 11,000 volunteers. Then the French troops poured over Mont Cenis, and through Genoa, and there followed—Magenta and Solferino! When the Peace of Villafranca ended the war, and Lombardy was annexed to Sardinia, the united Sardo-Lombard army grew by the month of February, 1860, to 127,577 men.

Still later, in August, 1861, when Tuscany and the Emilia had become provinces of the new kingdom, the National Army, uniting the troops of these new acquisitions, reached to the number of 183,363.

Yet later, in July, 1862, when all Italy save Rome and Venice were united, and when 12,000 Savoyards and Nizzians had been relinquished to France, the ITALIAN ARMY, now regularly formed, amounted to 323,570 men. As I have mentioned above, subsequent levies have raised it still higher, till in round numbers it may be said to reach, in 1864, 400,000 men. Of these 234,175 have been raised by levies since 1859.

This great army is in the opinion of good judges an excellent one in most respects. The physical appearance of the men is exceedingly good—markedly superior in height and strength to the French troops. Without having the sort of military affectation of the latter with their peg-top trousers and caps on one side, the Italians are thoroughly soldier-like, well made, and well set up. They are also full of life and energy; and, however sorrowful they may be when first drawn by the conscription, they soon take heart

again, and mix cheerily with their comrades. Happening to spend a couple of months during the last winter, within a few hundred yards of the curious barrack, formed out of the old arsenal of the Galleys, at Pisa, I was frequently struck by the gay and boy-like spirits of the soldiers, as they passed backwards and forwards by twos and threes on their errands into the town. A pleasanter-looking, or better-mannered set of men it would be hard to find in any country.

The officers of the Italian army are gentlemanly; those of the higher ranks, commonly men of some eminence. The proportion of Piedmontese Colonels to those of Tuscany and Naples, is very great; it is alleged, not less than 80 per cent. This has given some umbrage, or rather, it has afforded to the enemies of the government a handle for complaint. As the higher commands, however, could only be entrusted to experienced officers, and as such experienced men were hardly to be found out of the Sardinian dominions, the accusation of any unfairness against the government falls to the ground.

A much greater difficulty than that of the commanders has been found to lie in the non-

commissioned officers. An ensign or a cornet can be made out of a gentleman in a few weeks, but a Serjeant or a Corporal cannot be made out of a common soldier under several years. The recent formation of the Italian Army has as yet left no time for the formation of those steady veterans on whom so much of the *morale* of a regiment must depend. The King himself is fully aware of this difficulty, and told a gentleman of my acquaintance that it was his anxious wish to provide for it before engaging in any active service.

The relation of the Italian Army to the Romish Church is a curious one. Formerly it was the regulation that every officer and soldier should produce every year his ticket of confession. Even in Piedmont this absurd ordinance prevailed, and every gentleman or common soldier, however far might be his feelings from any Paschal penitence, was obliged to go through the ceremonies which his military superiors so curiously provided for his spiritual benefit. This regulation has been now for a few years abolished—since the rupture with Rome, I believe. The soldier may confess or not confess,

be absolved or not absolved, and go to heaven or purgatory, as the case may be, without interference of his commanding officer, whose only concern is with his readiness to encounter the fires of *this* world's cannon and musketry. Not so easy, however, is the matter even now, for the Pope has decreed: "No soldier who fights under the flag of Victor Emanuel shall go to heaven with *my* consent. I have turned the celestial key in the door! Let all faithful priests listen to no confessions, and grant no absolutions!" What is the result? Half the army say: "All right. We will dispense with the ceremony." But about another half say: "We must and will confess and be absolved. What is to become of our souls if we don't undergo that Poojah at Easter?" Thereupon the amiable government, unwilling to baulk a desire which it so lately sanctioned, does its best to find priests willing to set the Pope at nought and give the passport required, in defiance of his authority. Every regiment has its chaplain, who, by some fatality, seems always to be a pleasant round-faced young priest, looking half-ashamed of himself and of the gold cord round his wide-awake black hat. These chaplains con-

fess the soldiers as fast as they can; but, as half the army, or about 200,000 men, want to be absolved altogether at Easter, it seems the work is very hard at that season, and, as a colonel of a regiment of hussars informed me, the officers were compelled to use various devices to bring up extra ecclesiastical force to clear the field in time for Pasqua.

While all this attention has been lavished on the Army, the Navy of Italy has not been forgotten. The port of Spezzia is being deepened for its reception, and an arsenal, rivalling that of Toulon, is in process of erection, at a cost of not less than £3,000,000 sterling. Of course, the work of building ships is even slower than that of constructing an army. As yet, half of the vessels are unfinished; but when those now in process of making are completed, Italy will possess 120 vessels of war, of all sizes. Of these eleven will be iron-clad frigates. Her 120 altogether will bear 1,264 cannon, with a horse-power in steam of 25,940. Thirty-two armed vessels out of the 120 are all which are at present in actual service.

## CHAPTER V.

### ITALY TRIED BY JURY.

THE Railways, the Schools, the Armies of Italy, are hardly more important changes than that which is taking place in the administration of Justice in the provinces hitherto under the direction of despotic governments. The reform of the national jurisprudence is as yet, however, only in process of fulfilment, and awaits for its completion the publication of the New Code, which it is anticipated will be presented by the Commission to the House of Deputies in the next Session.

The laws of the various States of Italy before Annexation were all different one from another. The Neapolitan code is said to have been good in itself, only utterly vitiated by the corrupt executive. The Leopoldine laws are, I believe, recognised as among the most perfect ever com-

posed, and were not ill enforced. Their most familiar feature, the abolition of capital punishments, was introduced in the beginning of the reign of the late Grand-Duke, in consequence of a mistaken sentence on a young man who was beheaded for murder, vehemently protesting his innocence on the scaffold. Some years afterwards another man, when dying in the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova in Florence, confessed the crime for which the unhappy youth had been punished. The kind-hearted Grand-Duke was deeply affected by the incident, and solemnly proclaimed his resolution never again to permit of capital punishments in his dominions. It is said that if the law were now changed, and death punishments restored to the code, there would be no possibility of finding judges or witnesses for conviction of criminals. The Separate System for convicts has long been substituted for other punishments, and a few years ago, under the old *régime*, I had an opportunity of inspecting the great jail of the *Murate* in Florence, where the worst criminals were so confined. The building on the site of the famous Convent of the *Murate* (walled-up Nuns),

which plays such a part in the scandals of old Florence—is a prison, constructed on the most costly plan of our English ones, and with arrangements for the entire separation of the inmates, similar to such as are used in those wherein we have tried that system. The cells were large and clean, and fitted up with all conveniences for the trade of the occupant—carpenters' work, tailoring, etc. In all of them was a little shelf of books, among which I found (in a carpenters' cell) a copy of Boccaccio! The prisoners, however, especially those who had been confined for many years, looked scared and half deranged, and the kindly officials seemed to be but too well aware that madness was the natural result of such a mode of life. One poor fellow, on his cell door being opened, seeing a woman before him, rose with a look of joy and awe, and sunk on his knees before me in an attitude of supplication most affecting to witness. Heaven knows for what Saint or Madonna he took the strange English visitor! The officers simply said he was losing his mind, and begged me to withdraw.

The Piedmontese laws were less finished and

perfected, and somewhat less humane than the Tuscan, and at the Annexation fears were entertained that they would be forcibly substituted for them. A few changes of legal forms, however, have alone been introduced, which may vex the souls of old *avvocati*, as tenacious of their phrases as we have shown ourselves of our absurdest formulæ, but the practical alterations have been unimportant. A guillotine which, it is darkly rumoured, was once despatched from Turin to Florence, lies, still unpacked, where it was deposited on its arrival two years ago.

But if Tuscany had an excellent code, and Piedmont a fair one, who shall describe the state of Jurisprudence in those provinces which formerly owned the sway of the Successor of St. Peter, or of Bomba and Bombalino? Corruption and cruelty could no further go. No safeguards of person or property, no trial by jury, nor Habeas Corpus, nor Coroners' Inquests existed! Every judge almost had bought his office by a bribe, and used it with every venal trick. A man might be arrested on any pretence, and kept in prison for any length of time, *au secret*,

in hideous confinement, and finally condemned or set at liberty solely according as he could, or could not, bribe his judge higher than his accuser. The tales told of the enormities of this sort committed in Rome and Naples are endless. How far they were true, where no means are given by publicity of trial to contradict false rumours, may in some cases be doubtful. Many of the stories, however, are authenticated beyond question. The following, which I learned from a gentleman in high office, whose influence eventually procured the measure of mercy obtained for the sufferer, will give an idea of the bitterness of Papal spite. It refers to the celebrated gem engraver, C——. During the Republic in 1848 he had busied himself on several occasions in saving the works of art and books left behind by the nobles and clergy who had fled with the Pope. Among other things, he induced a mob in search of arms to refrain from supplying themselves from those in the collection of the Barberini, and on another occasion, he removed a whole library left for pillage to a place of security. When Pio IX and his friends returned, it appeared that C—— had

(with the laxity of the best of Italians), allowed the gentleman in charge of the Barberini Museum to present him with a single helmet, in return for saving the whole collection, and having at his own expense sent back one waggon load of the books removed, had left the proper owners to transport the rest to their library. For these offences the unfortunate man was condemned to be shot "*infamously*"—*i. e.*, in the back, a sentence commuted to imprisonment for life. After three years a benevolent foreign ambassador procured his pardon as a special favour from the Pope. On hastily announcing it to C——'s sister, the poor lady, who had ceased to hope ever to behold her brother again, fell down on the ground in a fainting fit as if struck by a blow. The genius and good faith of this poor C—— were both exemplified in another anecdote I have heard of him. He was one day with Rauch examining a collection of antique gems which Thorwaldsen was displaying. On the production of one of them on which Thorwaldsen set an especially high value, C—— pressed Rauch's foot in a significant manner, implying his disbelief of the antiquity of the

gem. When the party separated, Rauch asked C—— what he meant by questioning that Thorwaldsen's seal was really an antique? "Come with me," said the engraver, "and I will soon satisfy you of the fact." Rauch followed C—— to his own studio, and there found the wax impressions of the intaglio in every stage of progress, as it is the habit of these artists to take them. It was C——'s own engraving which Thorwaldsen had boasted of as a peculiarly fine antique.

Another story of Roman jurisprudence is more amusing and less tragic than that of C——, but as it has reached me through indirect channels, I give it with less security; believing, however, that in the main points it is true to facts. Mr. F., a well-known English resident in Rome, possesses a villa some miles out of town, beyond the Ponte Molle. Adjoining Mr. F.'s villa was another, belonging to the Marchese A., a gentleman holding office in the Roman government. One morning, a calf belonging to the Marchese was found killed, and suspicion fell on two fine dogs kept by Mr. F. at his villa. On hearing of the accident, Mr. F. hastened to write

a courteous letter to the Marchese, saying that he regretted to hear that there were reasons for supposing that his dogs had killed the Marquis's calf, but that he would make strict investigation, and if it proved that the case were so, he would be happy to repay the Marquis the price of his calf. This polite missive, however, failed to accomplish its peaceful purport, for before night Mr. F. received a legal summons, couched in peremptory forms, requiring him directly to make amends to Marchese A. for the damage done by his (Mr. F.'s) dogs against his property. Offended very naturally at this uncourteous behaviour of the Marquis, Mr. F. sought a Roman *Avvocato,* exposed his case, and told him he was quite determined to go to law rather than *now* pay down the money he had intended to offer. The Avvocato shook his head. "The case was a very difficult one. The Marchese A. was a very influential person. Nobody had seen the calf killed in the night it was true, but the calf had been certainly injured by dogs, and Mr. F. had dogs which might have injured it—altogether, it would be very hard to escape. Would Mr. F. allow the Avvocato to follow his own judgment

as to the way in which the case should be conducted?" Mr. F. gave *carte blanche* to his legal adviser. He would let him do as he pleased, and he would pay anything required; but to the insolence of the Marchese he would not succumb if he could help it. The avvocato promised to do his best; and after the usual delay, the trial came forward. Mr. F. knew nothing of the method his advocate intended to pursue, but sat in court awaiting the opening of the case for the prosecution. To his no small surprise, the Marchese A.'s lawyer, after a short exposition of the wrongs of his client and his client's calf, called up one after another seven witnesses, who all religiously swore that they had seen the calf of the Marchese A. killed on a certain night at a certain place by *two white dogs with short tails* (of course, the description of Mr. F.'s dogs). The case seemed, of course, to Mr. F. perfectly hopeless after this. That *nobody* had seen the calf killed, was nothing to the point now seven men had sworn they beheld the disaster. Presently, however, his own advocate arose, and the face of affairs was altered. He also had witnesses—*nine* good men and true, ho-

nourable citizens of Rome—and they also had seen the calf killed, but it was by *two black dogs with long tails*—dogs which could not for a moment be mistaken for Mr. F.'s white dogs with short tails! The court deliberated—by no means with the surprise an English court might display under similar circumstances. At last the sentence came. The judge addressed the plaintiff in person: "Signor Marchese! the Court regrets extremely that in the present case it cannot award you the damages you claim. The nine witnesses in favour of the Signor F. must outweigh the seven witnesses who have deposed in your favour. One thing only remains for the court to do, which it hereby does accordingly, and which it is hoped will be some satisfaction to the Signor Marchese. The defendant, Mr. F., is fined 30 scudi (about £7) for keeping dogs *di cattiva riputazione*" (of a bad reputation).

Such, or very nearly such, at all events, is Roman jurisprudence in the nineteenth century. The nation which first composed the Laws of the Twelve Tables, and in later ages the Pandects and Novels—the nation to which Europe owes almost its whole science of Law—is now governed

by functionaries utterly corrupt and subservient to the authorities who nominate them, and who are actually even *theoretically* exempted from obedience to any written code whatever. Since the return from Gaeta, it has been always affirmed by the Roman government that the old laws are suspended, and till a new code should be prepared and receive Papal sanction, his Holiness's subjects are to be governed at pleasure. The state of siege still subsists. Magistrates and judges are in each case to *declare* the law—*i. e.*, to *make* a law for the contingency. There is no reference to be made to any former law in the passing of sentence. It may well be asked under such circumstances, *not* "is injustice sometimes committed," but "does any man obtain justice at the hands of his venal and irresponsible judge?" Bribery has naturally become a settled institution; and for some curious occult reason, it seems the present of a goose or a turkey is the thing *de rigueur* on all occasions of small trials, when the magistrate is to be conciliated. A celebrated English artist, long resident in Rome, told me that a Roman friend, talking to him of a lawsuit in which he was engaged, and the expenses it

had involved, frequently repeated the word "turkeys" in a way which bewildered Mr. W. not a little. Finally, he discovered that his friend considered the perpetual immolation of those useful fowls at the altar of Themis—*i. e.*, his judge's larder—was as much a matter of course as we should reckon the payment of 6*s.* 8*d.* for our attorney's fee.

Of course, when political offences are in question, such mercy as might otherwise be obtained by favour, bribery, or other means, is not to be hoped. The world has heard enough of these affairs without my alluding to them further. The way in which priests pursue their enemies, assuredly surpasses the bitterness of any *lay* hatred. When Garibaldi's heroic wife Anita died, it can hardly be believed that the two poor men who buried her (and who had committed no other offence) were thrown into jail, and would doubtless have remained there for their lives had not some German gentlemen interfered for their release.

At Pisa, however, I heard a very droll story of the way in which priestly malice was once foiled under the old régime itself. It seems that there

was a young student who six or seven years ago found himself dying in the town. The priests of course came to him and proffered the "Consolations of Religion," *i. e.*, Confession and *olio santo*. The student, however, was a terrible infidel, and positively declined all such comforts. Great indignation and urgent remonstrances on the part of his ghostly advisers were all unavailing. He died impenitent, "unannealed." Before dying, however, he called a dear friend, another young student who had nursed him like a brother, and shared his infidelity:—"I entreat you," he said, "not to lose sight of my body till it is in the Campo Santo. I am sure these priests will play some desperate trick with it lest it be thought a man may safely die without the sacraments. Promise me you will not let it out of your sight." The friend consented; and remained with all constancy beside the corpse. The priests remonstrated and bullied—all in vain. The body was removed. He still followed it, and the last night prepared quietly to sit up beside it, taking with him, *par précaution*, a revolver concealed in his breast. Midnight came, and with it sudden and awful noises

and mysterious lights. Finally, from the gloom of the church, emerged a terrific figure,—horns, hoofs, tail and all complete, glowing with phosphoric light—that one creature who combines the distinguishing features of a Ruminant and the habits of the *Felis Leo!* "Holà!" shouted the student, "Do not go near that coffin!" The Prince of Darkness heeded not such paltry remonstrance, and visibly approached to seize the corpse. "Another step, and I shoot you," said the student. The Devil took the step; the student fired; and the fiend, with a howl of perfectly human agony, fell dead on the floor. Then burst into the place a whole band of priests, who had been watching the transaction, and had hoped to see the body of the infidel student brought off victoriously by their accomplice,—of course himself an ecclesiastic of the lower grade. What was to be done? It would never answer to bring to trial the young delinquent, and be obliged to produce in court the *corpus delicti*—the venerable Padre got up as a Devil. Tuscans are fond of jokes, and this joke would be too good ever to be forgotten. So the body of the infidel student was decently buried

after all, and the body of the Padre Diavolo was put quite quietly into sacred ground (we trust despoiled of the horns and tail), and the Grand Duke himself came down privately to Pisa to decide what could best be done with the man who had shot the Devil. Of course, in Rome or Naples, it would have been all plain sailing. No Pope or King would have found the least difficulty in making an end of such a case in the most effectual manner. Tuscany's prince, however, was a man of other counsels, and the young student was allowed privately to perform that judicious step, which our American friends denominate to "skedaddle". From thenceforth, it is a common saying, "There is no devil in Pisa. He was shot here some time ago."

In all the provinces now forming part of the kingdom of Italy, an assimilation of laws has taken place, and honest efforts are made to appoint righteous judges and give equal justice. Trial by jury is now universal, and the press being free and courts open, public opinion is brought to bear on all cases of importance. Not, however, till the publication of the New Code can this great Reform be considered accomplished,

or the assimilation of the laws of the different Provinces be completed. A Commission has now been engaged for a long time in Turin in preparing this Code, which will resemble, in some measure, but by no means precisely, the Code Napoléon. It is said that the draft is more than half accomplished, and that it will shortly be presented to the Camera dei Deputati and to the King. When it passes into law, the whole kingdom will then possess one uniform system of legislation, civil and criminal. Rumour states that some of the articles in the projected Code are exceedingly bold. The permission of Civil Marriages will certainly be included. Whether such marriages will be left open to the clergy, or a special clause inserted forbidding them to avail themselves of it, is a matter I have heard differently stated by various persons. Two Senators were sure such a clause would be inserted,—Passaglia rejected the idea with contempt as an insult which the Parliament would not inflict on the clergy. A less certain change than the law of Civil Marriages will be one I have heard of in Turin as forming a portion of the Code—a law giving women Municipal (not political) Rights

and making the marriage contract changeable at the option of the parties.

It is much to be hoped that, when this great Code becomes Law, and a just system, uniformly administered, replaces all the past irregularities and corrupt practices, some genuine respect and loyalty to it will spring up in Italy. Hitherto, the common feeling throughout the country has been wholly inimical to law *as such*. The legislators, the judges, and the *gens d'armes* were all equally distrusted and detested. If any love of justice existed, it was not in the courts of law of Southern Italy, at all events, that it could be displayed, nor by aiding as accusers or witnesses the trials in such courts. Nay, more. That same terrible Cardinal Virtue of Prudence (which is rather the Cardinal Vice of the Italian character), made men, even under the beneficent Tuscan laws, exceedingly cautious of giving testimony against any offender whatsoever, lest that offender or his friends might hereafter reciprocate such an "ill turn," or injure the trade, or reputation, or ambitious prospects of the witness. Justice might indeed call out "Stop thief!" But Prudence, simultaneously

whispering, like Dogberry, "Let him shew himself what he is, and steal out of your presence," was always listened to in preference. The grand old Arabic proverb, "He is a hero who maketh his enemy his friend," was transposed into "He is a fool who maketh an enemy where he might make a friend." Inquiring last winter of the probabilities regarding a "Martin's Act" for Italy, I was informed, by gentlemen well acquainted with the country, that the passing of such a law might be effected, but that its practical use, even in Tuscany, would be null. Sometimes, in a quarrel between two men, witnesses were willing to come forward, because, while making one their enemy, they ensured the friendship of the other. But for a *dog* or a *horse*—who on earth would incur the animosity of a person who might torture the brute? If some one did lodge a charge of the sort, the judges would pooh-pooh it directly. I do not feel sure, however, that my informant was right in this matter, seeing that 785 persons, from the highest to the poorest in Florence, were found willing, last winter, to attach their names to a memorial against the practice of vivisection at the Specola. It is hoped that the strong feeling

on the subject then exhibited will lead to the introduction of a law, which shall *not* be a dead letter, against all forms of cruelty to animals.

The prudent dislike to bearing witness, common in Northern Italy, increases as we travel south, till in Sicily, under the name of *omertà*, it is the bane of the whole country. It is always a significant fact, when a sentiment acquires a name, having hitherto and elsewhere passed without one in the crowd of human feelings. It is, for instance, shocking to know that the old Greeks had a word expressive of "Pleasure in the misfortunes of others." The thing must have been pretty common before people made a word for it. In like manner *omertà* reveals a portentous state of society existing at the present moment in Sicily. It appears that there is actually no means of obtaining witnesses to any crime (and, heaven knows! there are crimes enough in that unhappy island) because the consequences of bearing witness are much more formidable than the legal penalties of almost any crime. A robbery or assassination, we will suppose, has been committed by three ruffians in open daylight in a street. Ten people have seen

the act. But Ruffian No. 1 has an uncle in the service of the Marchese A.; and Ruffian No. 2 has a brother a priest; and Ruffian No. 3 would unquestionably stab anybody who whispered a word of accusation against him, and return after ten years at the galleys to do it. Nobody brings charges, for, if a man has been robbed, it is wiser to "bear the ills he has" than fly to others which he knows are pretty certain to exceed them, namely, sooner or later, assassination at the hands of the robber or some of his fraternity. And if a man be murdered, his surviving son or brother is much too "prudent" to entail his own speedy destruction by way of avenging the departed. The question arises, What *can* a Government do under such circumstances? There is no other course than either to leave the demoralised province to utter anarchy, or to employ its own paid agents to act as accusers and witnesses. But the moment we have a system of police testimony (especially when it must be, as here, the police of a different province), we are involved in all the *forms*, if not in the spirit, of the worst despotism. Government is at once accuser, witness, constable, judge, jury, and

jailer. Even if every official in the series were immaculately just and disinterested, the aspect of the whole process of trial would be most nefarious, and calculated to give rise to suspicions of all kinds. But what government on earth can procure for itself a whole army of immaculate officials? What corps of police and magistrates can be entrusted to perform between them the circle of judicial proceedings without ever deviating from the line marked out by simple justice? What men are they who will exercise such functions in a wholly corrupt and disorganised society, and never perpetrate acts of vindictiveness or personal spite, or accept bribes, or in one way or other pervert the ends of justice? No Government in the world could procure for itself such servants, least of all can that of a New Kingdom, which has had to choose between the hasty nomination of thousands of untrained men as *employés* in all its minor offices, or else the retention in their places of old *employés*, nominated by the corrupt despots it has replaced, and in hundreds of cases either traitors to their new masters, or incapables who have originally gained their places by bribery.

It is in the nature of things inevitable, that where such a state of things exists, scandalous injustices from time to time take place. Then, of course, the Papal party, and the Mazzinian party, point the finger to the misdeed, and raise a hue and cry over the oppressions of the new Italian Government. Nothing is more true than the observation a statesman once made to me, "Every government is good with good men; no government can be good with bad men." Where such a thing as Sicilian *omertà* exists, the most perfect laws, and the most honestly-intentioned executive in the world cannot escape falling into errors.

Among the great changes which the new laws are making in Italy, the partial suppression of Mendicancy and of Monasticism, are among the most remarkable.

It may be said that the ethics of old and modern times clash nowhere so decisively as in the treatment of poverty. In the mediæval mind, a Mendicant was already half a saint. In the modern mind, he is decidedly quite a sinner. To take no thought for the morrow, and lay up no treasures where moth and rust corrupt—to

sell all that a man has, and give it to the poor—to adopt the life of a fakir or a dervish, or a Franciscan—these were acts of peculiar sanctity, according to ideas prevalent through the whole East, at all times, and through the West, from the Apostolic days to the Reformation. But the tide turned with Luther so completely that, if the Archbishop of Canterbury were just now to canonise some new biblical personage in accordance with national sentiment, it would much more probably be St. Dives than St. Lazarus. Protestant moralists, with more soundness of common sense than accuracy of criticism, have always explained away the difficult precepts above cited: "*Take* thought for the morrow. Lay up treasures. Don't sell out capital. Give to no man who asks in the streets." In sober truth, the world has discovered that the purposes of benevolence are best secured, *not* by following the indiscriminate almsgiving of early times, but by a wholly different method, by each man being careful to secure competence for himself and his children, and then aiding others to help themselves. We have not changed the *intention* of the precepts; only with altered conditions of social life and advanced

science of political economy we endeavour to fulfil the same purpose by a reverse method. But Popery, the unchangeable, can admit no such revolution. She has more than sanctioned, she has over and over again canonised Beggary, from the exaltation above earthly things of St. Francis to the mere filthy laziness of St. Labbe. Her Mendicant Friars have formed a large cohort of her army, and perhaps at this hour exercise a better influence among the lowest classes than any other Order. Wherever Catholicism exists in its primitive force, unmodified by the strong hand of such a State as France, there Beggary flourishes. Ireland, Spain, the South American Republics, the Roman States, these are the Paradises of Mendicancy. Idleness, self-indulgence, intemperance, even dishonesty, may have reduced a man to poverty; he may be disgusting in his unclean rags, lying, sordid, blasphemous; still, if he exercise the sacred vocation of beggary, a certain tenderness will be felt for him, his curse will be feared, his blessing seriously accepted as a certain assistance on the heavenly way.*

* The common benediction of such individuals in Ireland —"May God's blessing and my blessing attend you"— seems to reveal some extraordinary theory in the minds of

The New Kingdom of Italy, it must not be forgotten, is still a Catholic Kingdom. At variance with the Pope, and under a species of vague Interdict, it yet proudly professes itself to be Catholic—nothing but Catholic. Not one in five thousand of its population desires to alter this, or would treat a proposal to alter it, save with disdain. The triple crown of the Pope is still the symbol of the precedence of Italy in Christendom.

How, then, is a Catholic country to condemn Mendicancy? Will it pass a law under which fifty saints, not to speak of thousands of beatified Capuchins, would all have been involved in the pains and penalties of vagabondage and street-beggary? It is not very logical surely to pray officially to a Saint in heaven, and then punish a man on earth for the practice which has mainly conduced to elevate the Saint to that advantageous position. Nevertheless, this illogical, but much needed act, the Italian Government has dared to do. Beggary may have been good for dead Saints; but it is

the donors not very easy to define. I have often been invited by wretched idle sots to purchase by some halfpence the benefit of their prayers for the soul of one long gone home to heaven.

recognised as bad for living sinners. A law was passed, November 13th, 1859, to the following effect:—"Beggary is prohibited. In those provinces wherein *ricoveri di mendicità* are not yet established, such persons as are totally destitute and helpless, either from age or infirmity, and who have no relations to maintain them, may be permitted to ask alms, but not outside their own commune. They must, further, be provided with a license, granted by the local authorities, and must wear a badge round their necks, testifying to the same." This law has not, as yet, been very rigorously put in practice. The passing of an Act of Parliament in England, and in Italy, are not quite parallel events. It is not to be expected, nor even wished, that such a practice as that of beggary should all at once be constituted into a crime deserving of severe treatment, while the whole condition of the poor is, as yet, unprovided for by the new system. Nevertheless, much has been done in various ways to suppress pauperism throughout Italy, and the results are very perceptible to any one accustomed to the state of things under the old governments. The contrast between a town belonging to Victor Emanuel and

a town belonging to the Pope, in respect of street beggary, is quite unmistakable. In Naples, in particular, the 70,000 lazzaroni, who were King Bomba's particular pets, were, under the new regime, set to work vigorously on the railways, the women no less than the men, and the greater number of them have now passed into the class of labourers. How soon the *upper* classes in Naples will be taught to give up begging—royal gardeners, for instance, occupying positions like Sir Joseph Paxton, who have requested me to give them a *buono mano* of a few *carlini*, and Archpriests, who have implored me to buy their books as an act of charity—of course it is impossible to say.

More daring still than the attack on Beggary has been that of the new government on Monasticism. On the 29th May, 1859, a law was passed, which has since been applied to all the provinces except Sicily. It provides for the gradual extinction, and in some cases the immediate suppression, of all monasteries and convents of religious orders, which are not occupied either in preaching, education, or the care of the sick. The property of such religious Orders, and of the

Chapters of certain Collegiate Churches, which are sinecures, has passed, according to this law, into the hands of government, which engages to pay a life-pension to all persons who had claim to share in such estates, when the law was promulgated. This pension is equally paid, whether the person continue to reside in the same convent, or is drafted into another, or prefers to quit the religious life altogether, and return to a secular vocation. There is an administration called the "*Cassa Ecclesiastica,*" whose office it is to take possession of the property falling under this law, and pay the pensions of the members of the suppressed community.

The effects of this law are becoming every day more widely experienced. As the members of any convent die off, and the numbers fall below a certain fixed amount, the survivors are drafted off into other convents of the same order, and their old abode is either sold or converted into a barrack or other public institution. The money obtained and saved to the nation by this means is already very considerable and for a long time to come will go on increasing. It is looked to, in fact, by Italian Statesmen as one of the most

fertile sources out of which some help may be found towards meeting the enormous annual deficit of the revenue. As yet, the Orders suppressed are as above-stated only the absolutely idle and ascetic ones—those whose pretence it was to aid the community by their *prayers* alone—that is, precisely by following the example of the Pharisees of old, and saying, "Be ye warmed and fed," while declining to give a baiocco towards fuel or bread. Some idea may be formed of the multitude of these drones, since the reduction of their numbers in Tuscany alone during the three years since the enforcement of the new law amounts, it is said, to 5000 monks and nuns. Very shortly, no doubt, the suppression of other orders, the Preaching and the Educating, will follow; Othello's occupation will be taken away by the Normal Schools, and then the work of "driving out the rooks" will go on at a more rapid pace. If the Kingdom of Italy takes by conscription 45,000 men every year from civil life, to fill the ranks of the army, it will be no small compensation if it send back some thousands of others from the altars where they would have bound their hands to idleness for the rest of their lives.

Another new law of importance has been one reforming the Coinage and Weights and Measures throughout the whole of Italy. Formerly each separate State had of course its own proper coinage (a great portion being of very debased metal), and a system of weights and measures of every possible variety. The introduction of an uniform coinage and measurement throughout Italy was at once a grand reform and a very obvious type of the unification of the country. The choice of the decimal system and assimilation of the same with that of France was doubtless sagacious, and on the whole has vastly assisted trade. Of course a few suffer. The old "paul" of Tuscany a little exceeded the value of the half franc which has replaced it, and those who once received pauls and now receive half francs groan over their afflicting dispensation. I have even seen a tender reminiscence offered to the exiled Grand Duchess composed of the execrable metal of the old *crazie* which flourished their dingy and defaced countenances under her reign. The nation, however, at large, decidedly rejoices in the issue of an ample supply of good gold and silver pieces—of twenty

franchi, ten franchi, and five franchi of gold, and of two franchi, one franco, and half a franc of silver—all adorned with the portraits of Vittorio Emanuele and his moustaches on one side, and the notice of the value of the coin on the reverse. The copper, or rather bronze coinage, contains pieces of ten centesimi, five centesimi, and even of a single centesimo, or the fifth of a French sou, less than half a farthing sterling. Of all these coins, there seems abundant supply, and the old francesconi, and scudi, and paoli, and carlini, and crazie, and all the rest, are rapidly disappearing. While in Rome, for any sum equal to a pound sterling, a bank-note is nearly always in use; in the Kingdom of Italy it has never once happened to me to be offered one either at banks or by tradesmen in exchange for cheques of five or six hundred francs.

The measures and weights of Italy have all been changed as well as the coinage, and there are *Chilometri* along the roads as regularly as Kilometres in France.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ITALY READS HER NEWSPAPER.

BEYOND all the reforms now enumerated, the Italian government has undertaken another, of perhaps wider significance than any of the rest. It has set free the Press. I am informed, by those best qualified to know, that the liberty thus accorded is quite real and *bonâ fide*, and that, unless under such circumstances as would lead an English government to prosecute, the Italian government will not do so. The results of such an absolute transformation of the whole literary system of a country we must, of course, wait some years to see. From the ebb to which despotism, civil and religious, had driven out literature, it must take many a day for the tide to rise again to high-water mark. An *Index Expurgatorius* for the benefit of theology and physics; a political Censorship for the correction of the daily press

and of any works aspiring to treat of social science, political economy, or modern history; these were two engines to which Xerxes' whips were not to be compared. Italian Popes and Dukes were much wiser than the old Persian. By their care and attention, the once magnificent literature of Italy has dwindled to the issue of a few pitiful pamphlets and translations of French novels; and the periodical press, which might have arisen with that of other European countries, has been put back by about a century. The very language has been watered down, from Dante's time to our own, till, for a dozen words of his strong vocabulary, about eighteen or twenty of modern flowing Italian *verbiage* are needed. It seems truly as if the task had been set before the nation, How to use most words and the greatest number of syllables to express the smallest quantity of thought. A bit of nervous English, with an epigram or two in it, translated into elegant Italian, becomes so mild and fair-spoken, that the effect is that of knocking a nail into a wall with a pillow instead of a hammer. The rules of composition (thanks to the Della Cruscan School) are all as strict as possible; no sort of liberty is left for

either introducing new words, or putting old ones into more vigorous combinations. An educated Italian holds up his hands with horror and disgust at any such innovation as an English writer in our living, seething Saxon tongue would be at perfect liberty to use. The crow-quill of the last century must not be exchanged for any goose or swan quill or steel pen of our own. Phrases most unmeaning and ridiculous, provided they be legitimately constructed, pass muster. A newspaper writer, when he wants to say a certain report is a lie, observes gracefully that it is "pienamente inesatta" *(fully inexact)*. But if he were to fill up one of the innumerable vacancies in his vocabulary by a word most legitimately formed from the Latin, he would be condemned by every Italian pretending to literary taste. To read a modern Italian book (I speak, at least, my own feelings) is about as wearisome as to read a long poem in the old French heroic metre, such as the Henriade. You are not listening to a man giving forth himself in such guise as nature may teach: "*Le style c'est l'homme*" is not true as regards him, for he has no business to have an individual style at all. He must write under re-

strictions as close as the lines in those old copy-books, wherein there were little breaks for the up and down strokes, and not a fraction more sloping up or sloping down was possible. It is a *tour de force* he is performing, to express what he has got to say under certain difficulties. True, some Italians conquer all this—Mazzini, d'Azeglio, Passaglia, all write and speak with combined elegance and vigour, but lesser men can make nothing of it. They dance a minuet when they ought to be marching in quick time down the road.

A *few* things are needed to create a literature: first, a language; secondly, some writers; thirdly, some readers. Italy has at present to revive her language (shall we say to exchange that polished and inlaid steel corslet for a Garibaldi red shirt?), and she has then to make the writers, and teach the readers. There is a circle she must manage to break in some way or other—the circle of cause and effect; of there being no readers because there are no writers, and no writers because there are no readers; no book trade because there is no literary public, and no literary public because there is no book trade; miserable news-

papers because few people buy them, and few people buying them because they are miserable. Happily, one little transgression of the circle leads to another; a few more writers will make several more readers; and several more readers will help the book trade; and the habits of a reading public will soon raise the periodical press. Italians are generally, however, little disposed or able to spend money on luxuries of the class of books, though ready enough to stint themselves actually of food for matters of shew—for fine dress and carriages, and a box at the opera. The ideas of subscribing for first class newspapers, joining book clubs, and forming private libraries, are degrees of comparison of extravagance few of them have yet entertained. Perhaps, just at present, with so many new lines of commerce, and heavier taxation, there are special difficulties in the way. Still, the business has been begun. Italy will have a literature again. Freedom of thought, the intense new life pouring through the nation, will break out and make a way for itself, we cannot doubt, ere long. What that literature may be—what place it may take in the Europe of the twentieth century—who may ven-

ture to foretell? There may be again a Virgil, a Cicero, a Tacitus; again a Dante, a Tasso, and a Galileo on that eternally fertile shore. Italian genius has been silent for two centuries, or, rather like the fires of her volcanoes, it has been slumbering under its lava crust, to burst out, perchance, with a splendour great as ever of old. No one who knows the Italian nation believes that its ancient fire is extinguished. Whatever may be the failings of the people in the use of their gifts, the existence of those gifts is beyond all doubt or question. One reflection more adds to the brightness of this augury. The *freest* press (as England has proved) is the purest and most moral press in the world. The censorship of politics and religion in France and Italy have only degraded the literature on which they acted into lower and lower grossness and immorality. The freedom of the English press has been the purification as well as elevation of English literature. If Italy can but revive the genius of the Augustan or the Medicean age, nay, but a ghost of that genius,—enlightened by the larger science, warmed by the higher philanthropy of our century, —then, with Freedom to give it wings and raise

it above the mire, that Genius of Italy may soar more loftily than ever yet over the world.

The changes as yet produced in the literature of Italy are nearly confined to the newspaper press. There are a few more book-shops, a few (but not many) more Italian books, a considerable sale of Bibles and also of certain French works, amongst which Renan's *Vie de Jésus* and its two Italian translations, and the *Maudit* and the *Religieuse* stand conspicuous. Liverani's book, About's *Rome*, and several works on Brigandage, are also to be seen everywhere; but of anything to be called a national literature, there is as yet no sign. The newspapers which have really sprung to life are still at the stage of our own a century ago—not so advanced indeed, perhaps, as that reprint of the *Times* of 1763 showed itself. One of the largest, *L'Italie*, is published in French for the use of foreigners and natives, the knowledge of French being almost universal among educated people in Italy. Of the Italian newspapers, properly so called, the most important are *L'Opinione* of Turin, the Ministerial organ, the *Perseveranza* of Milan, and the *Nazione* of Florence—all constitutional. The Maz-

zinians have got two papers, *L'Unità Italiana* and *Il Diretto;* and the Reactionary, or Codino and Papal, party have got *L'Armonia, La Civiltà Cattolica,* and *Il Contemporaneo.* Passaglia himself edits a daily journal, *La Pace,* and a weekly one, *Il Mediatore,* to represent his section of liberal churchmen. The Protestants publish at Florence the *Eco della Verità,* and some minor papers there and at Naples. Besides these, there are political papers published in various provinces: the *Gazzetta Piedmontese,* the *Gazzetta di Genova,* the *Gazzetta di Firenze,* the *Nazionale di Napoli,* the *Giornale Offiziale di Napoli,* the *Gazzetta Offiziale di Sicilia,* the *Nuovo Cimento* of Pisa, the *Lombardia* of Milan, the *Piccolo Corriere d'Italia,* the *Italiano* of Florence, &c. There are also a certain number of scientific periodicals now issued in Italy. Of these the *Rivista Contemporaneo* is the best, but a very long way behind the *Revue des deux Mondes,* or of our second-rate quarterlies. There are also, of various degree of merit, the following—

Statistica di Toscana.
Raccoglitore Medico.
Annali Civili del Regno delle due Sicilie.
Giornale dell' Arti e Industria di Torino.
L'Istitutore di Torino.
Biblioteca Italiana.

Giornale dell' Ing. Architectro di Milano.
Giornale dell Istituto Lombardo.
Rivista Omœopatica di Firenze.
La Rivista di Firenze.
Il Tempo, Giornale di Medica e Chirurgica.
Museo di Scienze e Letteratura di Napoli.
La Temia (*The Themis*).
Gazzetta di Tribunali.
Letture di Familie.
La Guardia Nazionale
Annali Universali di Statistica.
Il Mondo Illustrato.
Archivio Storico Italiano.
Giornale Scien. e Letter. di Perugia.
Rivista dei Communi.
Il Politecnico.
Giornale di Medica Veterinaria.
Effemeridi di Pubblica Istruzione.
La Famiglia e la Scuola.
Il Bacofilo.
Il Giardiniere.
Giornale Agrario.
Atti dei Georgofili.
Il Coltivatore.
Repertorio d'Agricultura.
L' Economica Rurale di Torino.
Rivista Agronomica.
Il Commercio di Firenze.

Besides these, there are (or were a few months ago, for they are always starting afresh and dropping off) six or seven humorous papers: *Il Lampione* of Florence being the best of them, *L'Uomo di Pietra, Il Piovano Arlotto, Pasquin, La Chiacchiera,* and *L'Arlecchino.* The re-issue of *Punch,* in its first volume, gives a tolerable comparison with the *Lampione.* The wit is somewhat of the same kind, less pointed and more personal than the English humourist would now condescend to use. The Italian paper has lately, however, obtained the services of an artist who,

under the pseudonym of *Matà*, produces excellent lithographs. Some of his sketches are clever enough, and all are well drawn. It must be owned, however, that though we owe the words "Lampoons" and "Pasquinades" to Italy, it is hardly to be hoped we shall owe it further any very animated jokes. The language does not lend itself, like French, to anything epigrammatic, and the genius of the people, albeit gay and lively, seems to partake but moderately of wit, and not at all of humour. An Italian Sydney Smith, or an Italian Leech, are quite incogitable. A lively Italian writer of the old school wrote strings of indecent anecdotes, and the nation has ever since spoken of the *Decamerone* as if it were on the level of *Don Quixote*. A modern Italian hammers away on the old anvil of immoral priests and silly women, and now and then makes a feeble hit at the absurdities of English travellers—and there the joke is exhausted. The favourite witticism just now in Italy seems to be a print of a particular kind, which, when widely opened, displays some innocent-looking picture—four prize pigs, a goat, a cat, or the like; when folded in a particular

manner, these pictures become portraits of Garibaldi, the Pope, Bombalino, or anybody else. It must be owned the fun of this is not very overpowering. The best of the caricatures are somewhat serious satires on priestly doings, and it is curious enough to see crowds of Italian professed Catholics, gathered laughing round the windows where such things are exhibited. One of these represents a church with the priests showing the people a winking Madonna; in the background, behind the altar, other priests are disclosed pulling the cords. In a second, the Jesuits are collecting money to "save the Church," and squabbling for it among themselves behind the scenes. Another, more audacious still, represents a crucifix on an altar, and the Pope kneeling before it; Christ lifts his foot and kicks the tiara from the Pope's head, thus performing the latest miracle of the Church.

I have now very briefly and imperfectly sketched some of the leading changes which the New Government has made in Italy. Railways, the postal system, the telegraphs, have been at least doubled in extent and usefulness; some

3000 kilometres of railway and 1200 of telegraph wires having been actually added. Education has been promoted on the scale of 21,000 Elementary and 38 Normal Schools (of which far the greater number have been newly opened), beside Infant Schools and Adult Schools to a very considerable extent. The Army, amounting to nearly 400,000 men, has been actually created. The Jurisprudence of the kingdom has at least been relieved of its worst evils—trial by jury has been established, and the nation waits for the speedy promulgation of an uniform Code of the best laws for securing the life, liberty, and property of the subject which the present stage of legal science may be able to furnish. There is no fear remaining of a government desiring ever again to tamper with the course of justice. Trade has been assisted by the removal of a multitude of obstructions, by the abolition of passports between the provinces, the facilities offered by the book-post and samples'-post for commercial affairs, and, finally, by the complete reform of the coinage and the system of weights and measures. Mendicancy has been partially repressed, and, last not least, the Press has been

set free, and the first step taken towards the elevation of Italy to the rank of a literary country. It must surely be owned that these are results of four years work and forty millions of money, of which a nation may justly be proud. If there be some who tell us that many of these reforms are more ostensible than actual, and that much is needed yet to make the new schools, the new army, and the new laws really effective; —if there be others who treat all such reforms with disdain, and say that constitutional liberty is valueless without a Republic; and education, and railways, and armies, and a free press of no avail without the annexation of Rome and Venice; —to both I would say, "Point to any other people or government who in so short a time have accomplished so much, and consider whether, in laying deep the foundations of future civilisation, more has not been done for the nation than by raising the Cross of Savoy on the columns of St. Mark, or even by fulfilling its greatest and most legitimate ambition—gathering the Senate of Italy in the Capitol of Rome."

## CHAPTER VII.

### "LIBERTY, EQUALITY, AND THE FEUDAL SYSTEM."

WHEN Cherubina, in the *Heroine*, makes her oration to the Irish hay-makers, we all remember how she concludes by proposing for their programme of action the above delightful combination of advantages. This *platform*, as our American friends would call it, perpetually recurs to the mind in marking the various and wholly inconsistent objects which are frequently set forth by the same people with the utmost sincerity. Especially in Italy are the three ideas continually lumped together, and society made to represent the not very consistent result. I have thought that a few remarks on the changes taking place in this way, and speculations on their probable consequences, may have some interest for my readers, whether

they hold by Liberty and Equality or by the Feudal System, or prefer, like the sage Cherubina, to unite all three in their aspirations.

The Liberal party in Italy corresponds with the Whig party in England, not only in the general scope of its aim and principles, but in the curious circumstance that its great centre lies, *not* in the lower strata of society, where we are accustomed to think the desire of liberty is strongest, but in the higher ranks, where some of the noblest families in the land have adopted the cause of a free constitution and of rational progress. There are, indeed, in Rome, Florence, and all the old court cities, a majority of nobles attached to the elder *régime*, to the Pope and the exiled sovereigns. In Rome, probably, very few are liberally disposed, either of the handful who claim a classic ancestry, or the large number who, like the Barberini and Borghesi, trace their rise from the nepotism of the Popes. The accomplished Duca di Sermoneta, of the great house of Gaetano, and Prince Piombino, the exiled master of the beautiful Ludovisi Villa, are almost alone in the reputation of liberal opinions. In Florence the families of Corsi, Corsini, Ad-

mari, Martelli, Alessandri, etc., are all notoriously *Codini*,—the Strozzi, the Ricasoli, Ridolfi, and a few others, being alone in their adhesion to the government. Still, however, it is these liberal nobles, even when in a minority in their provinces, and with them the *haute bourgeoisie*, who have mainly contributed to the present order of things. They are the statesmen, the cultivated and well-informed, the men of letters, and their desire of freedom and progress has been of that rational sort which enabled them to steer clear of the Scylla and Charybdis of revolution and despotism which lay in their course.

On the other hand, the Codini are singularly composed; partly of the old feudal aristocracy, attached by sympathy and hereditary friendship to the exiled princes, and partly of the low-born priesthood, who now alone supply the ranks of the Church.

It must not be overlooked in any review of the state of Italy, that a very important change has taken place in the last few years in the constituency of the whole ecclesiastical body, secular and regular. Formerly, the younger sons of

the nobles, in Italy (as in France under the old *régime*) accepted the tonsure—more regularly, indeed, in Italy than in France, since the Cardinalate and the Papacy itself were nearer to their grasp, and (according to the influence of their families), more or less fairly an object of their ambition. But all this is over. Since the French conquest the whole family system of Italy has been gradually changing from the feudal to the democratic, till *Majorats* are altogether abolished, and the younger sons, by the inheritance of proportionate fortunes, are relieved from the necessity of entering the Church as a means of support. Added to this, has come a general feeling towards the priesthood, curiously mingled of official respect and personal contempt. The tide having once turned, and the young men of good family ceasing to flock into the Church, the descent was rapid, the priesthood, represented by persons of lower and lower degree, became less and less socially respected, or looked to as a possible profession for a gentleman. Even in ordinary society, where the chaplain, director, or tutor, formerly made a regular part of every *Salon* and had his place at every

table, the last ten years has produced a total change; and the visitor may dine at twenty tables, and frequent the best houses familiarly for months together, without once seeing the skirt of a *Soutane*. The ladies of the family attend Church and see their spiritual guides—perhaps a great deal too frequently—in the Confessional. But they no longer admit them to the intimacy of their homes; they are, in fact, socially unfit for their circle. Only in the case of some learned tutor for their sons is an exception made to the rule of exclusion.

Thus it has come to pass that the Church is recruited only from the lower classes, save in the circumstances of any peculiar devotional feeling, or any special prospect of advancement, such as a Cardinal or Episcopal uncle might supply. The junior nobles of Italy go into the army or the navy, or into Parliament, or live (as too many are disposed) on their share of the family fortunes, with any possible addition from the dowry of their wives. The *Mezzo Ceto* of the richer sort become merchants, bankers, *avvocati*, physicians, engineers, farmers, or idlers, like the others. But neither noble nor bourgeois thinks

of entering the priesthood or becoming a monk, as probably his uncles and granduncles did for a thousand years. He must be very far down indeed in the scale to think of *that* resource!

Thus the Church of Rome at the present moment is mainly composed of men who have risen from the ranks, either of the peasantry or smaller tradesmen. Those who are allied by birth to the higher classes and may retain traditions of their feelings and manners, may be almost counted on the fingers; like the Pope himself, half a dozen Cardinals in Rome, the Archbishop of Pisa (who is a Corsini, and spoken of as probable successor to the tiara) and a few more. The remainder view the existing government and its supporters, not only with priestly hate and political enmity, but also with the social jealousy of a lower caste. The family bond has ceased to unite the liberal laity with the retrograde priesthood; and the last mitigation which might have softened the rancour of the fallen sacerdotal order towards their conquerors, is wanting.

The change to which I have above adverted, in the laws of succession to property in Italy, is

likely to lead to many other results beside this of deterring the cadets of great families from entering the Church. Beginning from the French conquest, under the Great Napoleon, the system of primogeniture has gradually given way in one province after another, different laws regulating succession having prevailed at one time in Lombardy, Tuscany, etc. Since the Union, an universal system has been adopted and embodied in the Constitution. It is briefly this. All property, real and personal, is subject to the same regulation. Over one half of it a father has absolute testamentary freedom; he may devise it to one of his children, or divide it at pleasure, or leave it away from his family. The other half of his property, be it money or lands, must be divided equally among his children, be they males or females. Such is the law. The practical result seems as yet to be beneficial. Parents usually divide *all* their property among their children, reserving for their widows what their settlements require; and the brothers and sisters, usually, are able to make friendly arrangements, preserving the landed estates and town palaces from going to the hammer. They are aided in such arrangements (which would appear

impossible with us, under such circumstances of division,) by several variances from our conditions.

1. There are rarely more than three, or at most, four, children in any Italian family.

2. The daughters are nearly invariably married young, and, consequently, in the father's life-time. An old maid is almost unheard of in any class in Italy; least of all, in the monied class, even in cases of great personal deformity. The *dot*, if sufficient for the rank in life, is certain to secure a husband, the only question being, whether he is a little younger or older, richer or poorer. The ugly, deaf, squinting, or hump-backed lady, with her fifty thousand francs, does not look for quite so young or wealthy a husband as if she were beautiful and well-made; but she is equally sure to have *some* husband found for her; and *that* husband she is prepared to accept. Of course, when daughters are thus settled in the father's life, their fortunes are somehow paid by the parent, and *not*, I believe, usually by any charge encumbering his landed property after his death.

3. Italian houses are enormously large, and Italian families have all the habit of living under the same roof—brothers, sisters, uncles, nephews

—each in separate apartments, with either separate or united *ménages*, as may be convenient. Our idea of a house for each family, the family meaning only parents and children, is almost unknown anywhere on the Continent, and, least of all, in Italy. Thus, supposing three brothers and two sisters (which would constitute a miraculously large family circle here) to require to divide between them a Palazzo in town, and a villa in the country, they would neither think it needful to sell them, and divide the proceeds, nor yet give the town-house to one and the country-house to another, and charge the holders with the shares of the three juniors. These plans, which alone would suggest themselves to us in such a dilemma, would probably hardly enter an Italian's head. The brothers and sisters, with wives and children, would all live in both or either house, as season and convenience might decide; possibly one brother going off, or one sister marrying immediately; but, very likely, no division whatever being made. How such things are, and no quarrels arise—how Italians and French, and Germans, too, contrive to be happy and friendly, with complicated households, which no one dare

attempt to set up in England—is a problem very well worth discussing. A simpler, and cheaper, and far less ostentatious, mode of life, may go for something—more amenable natures, and less positive wills, for a great deal more. Let it be understood that the resource of putting their sisters in a convent, to arrange their claims for house-room, would be a project now (in 1864) utterly out of date. That feudal form of female infanticide is a thing of the past. If women go into convents now in Italy, it is the priests who lure, or their own enthusiasm which pushes, them thereto. Fathers and brothers no longer make nunneries receptacles for unprovided relatives, or reformatories for refractory ones.

4. The number of new employments opened to young men, the vast increase of the army and navy, the growth of trade, the all too-numerous openings for a career, given by the hundred minor offices of state, filled by tribes of *impiegati*, make it an easy matter for a young man of good connections to work his way. Land is more valuable, property of all kinds in the cities is more valuable, higher charges are more easily to be obtained. Thus the elder son, without his *majorat*,

is not poorer than his grandfather who possessed it; while the younger son, with his share of it, and his profession, is a great deal richer than his great uncle, who had no share, and no profession, save the Church. A nobleman, of high rank and office, assured me, that on the whole, throughout Italy, families of the *status* of his own were all the better, in a pecuniary point of view, and none the worse for the abolition of primogeniture, and the introduction of the present order of things.

In finding, however, that at present the Italian nobility have not suffered from the radical change made by the new law of succession, we cannot at all feel assured that we have got to the bottom of the very curious problem presented to modern society by the relative claims of the principles of an equal and an unequal division of property. The circumstances to which I have alluded above as having saved Italian families from injury, are some of them evidently peculiar to the country at this crisis. When the new spur given to public works ceases to act, when the army of soldiers and the army of *Impiegati* are both reduced (as they *must* be reduced, if the nation is

not to be bankrupt), when the patriarchal mode of housing themselves is given up by the Italians, and marriages are less matters of parental arrangement, and therefore less common,—when all these things "begin to come to pass," then the loss of the *Majorats* will begin to tell on society. The great houses will be gradually despoiled of outlying property, and then the chief palaces and villas will be sold to permit of the payment of younger children's shares, or left (as often now) uninhabited because the owner cannot afford to occupy them.* Then the nobility of Italy will undergo the fate of that of France and gradually become an order decorated with empty titles which no actual wealth or political influence renders important. The contempt displayed by the French lower classes for these *titrés* is doubtless the same which awaits in time

* I am writing at this moment in a large and beautiful villa in North Italy, the rooms of which are hung with portraits of the owner's ancestors, and the hall adorned with their armour and the lances and halberts of their followers. The house is in perfect repair, handsomely furnished. The master, however, lives in a poor little house over the gateway, with his deaf wife (a rich heiress), and lets his paternal abode contentedly every year to *forestieri*. Hundreds of Italian nobles do the same in all the great cities.

the representatives of those grand historic names of Italy, Sforzas and Colonnas, and Santa Croces, and Aldobrandini, and Massimi,—which sound in our ears like the sackbut and psaltery of old. Is this good—is this all as it should be? Ought the dead past to bury its dead of Dukes, Marquises, and Barons, as Nature has buried the megatherium, the plesiosaurus, and the pterodactyle? Will a better organised *fauna* arise upon earth when all these creatures with their coronets and coats of arms have become fossils, and are only disinterred by antiquarians and speculated upon in archæological societies? There is a great deal to be said on the matter, and though a great deal *has* been said already, I am sadly tempted to say a little more.

Two reasons may be urged for the maintenance of an hereditary aristocracy (titled or untitled) such as can be secured only by the system of *Majorats* regarding Real property. The first reason is Political—namely, the obvious use to a free Constitution of an Order holding a middle place between King and Commons, and forming a second branch of the legislature like the English House of Lords, neither immediately nominated by the

sovereign like the Senates of France and Italy, nor elected by the citizens like that of America. The principle of a Second House of legislature being apparently universally accepted, the superiority of one thus independently formed seems evident. The other reason for the maintenance of the law of primogeniture is Social—namely, the experienced advantage of the existence in a country of an hereditary class who shall represent the highest culture, and retain the tradition of the most polished manners. Civilisation of the highest kind being clearly a thing thus transmissible, the physical "high breeding" of the human race obeying in a certain measure (though with great exceptions) the same law of descent as that of horses and cattle, it appears on the face of the matter, imperative that all possible care should be taken to maintain the stock in which it may be perpetuated. Such arguments are further enforced by alleged observations of the deterioration of manners in countries like America and France, where Majorats have either never existed or have been abolished.

Regarding the first reason, a few reflections suggest themselves. There are two ways in

which the philosophy of Government may be contemplated. First, it may be argued that a government exists for a definite purpose. It is not a thing whose existence is an end in itself, only a means to another end. A society of saints and sages would leave a government nothing to do. For what end, then, do human governments exist? Surely for the simple and only one, that *right may be done;* that no member of the community should suffer wrong, and every member of the community should enjoy the natural rights of a moral being to life, property, and that freedom which is circumscribed only by the equal freedom of every other moral agent. This is so obvious, that it is a mere platitude to assert it; yet, in all our judgment of the different conduct of human government, it is continually forgotten, and we need to be reminded of it every time we undertake to speak of them.

Now, if the end of all government is, that "Right may be done"; and if a government which should secure that right perfectly to all its subjects would be absolutely faultless, and leave no room to desire anything better till man reaches a condition requiring no government at all; then,

we say, it is clear that the problem of all States is simply this: How can such an approximation as human fallibility permits, to such an ideal government, be best secured? How can we most certainly provide that the "Right shall be done?"

The question posed in this manner leaves only room for the response—"By committing the government to the hands of those who *know* what is right, and whom we have reason to hope will *do* the right when they know it." Obviously, the two elements of Knowledge and Will are both needed, and obviously the Knowledge alone is within our power approximately to ascertain; the Will must remain a matter of presumption. To give power to those who *do not* know how to do right is to render even their good will useless. To give it to those who *do* know how to do it is, indeed, to run the risk of a failure in their will to perform it; but it offers the only warrant human fallibility leaves to us of the probability that the end may be accomplished, that the will may accompany the knowledge.

This is actually (from the point of view we are contemplating) the whole theory of government.

It only remains for experience to shew afterwards *how* it is to be ascertained what men or orders of men know how to do the right, and how the failures in their efforts to do it may best be guarded against and corrected. It *may* prove that one man alone in the State, the true King (*knowing-man*), can best be trusted; it may be the king and upper classes only; it may be the lower also; it may be women and youths. All these points must be decided on experimental grounds only. Who could discover an *à priori* reason why power should stop at a certain rank or degree of wealth or age? Only by experience, approximately, may lines be drawn, dividing the qualified from the unqualified. Literary education, though a great and (in these newspaper days) an indispensable element in the qualification, is not the sole one, though it be the sole reducible to test. Nothing but actual practical trial of who can, and who cannot prove knowledge of political and civil right, ought to determine us to confide the protection of such rights in their hands. Thus (proceeding on this line of thought) all the arguments about the equal rights of every man to share in the govern-

ment of the community to which he belongs, appear to be altogether futile. The government only exists, and is submitted to by his fellow citizens, for the end that "Right may be done," and if he does not even know now what that right *is*, it is absurd that he should be entrusted with the smallest share in it. If he know nothing, for instance, of the rights and wrongs of the Federals and Confederates, the Germans and Danes, the English and Japanese, it is absurd that he should have a voice, or a thousandth share in a voice, in deciding whether we should recognise the Southern States, or go to war for Schleswig-Holstein, or make restitution for Kagosima. And if he know nothing of the principles of political economy or of criminal law, it is equally absurd he should be allowed to vote about the income-tax or the convict system. It is not merely *a little hazardous* (as we often see it treated) to give him power under such circumstances—it is suicidal; and (strictly speaking) as absurd as to appoint a blind man to purchase the national pictures. Thus, proceeding on the utilitarian argument, and regarding only the most efficacious means of reaching the ends

of government, it is clear enough that Power may be fitly lodged only in the hands of those whose superior knowledge of all the subjects with which such government has to deal, qualifies them to form enlightened judgment thereon. To deny this position, and claim a share of power for the illiterate (*on these grounds*) it is necessary to hold the ridiculous doctrine that Knowledge is needless to Justice, and that the hap-hazard action of ignorant men would be as likely to be just as that of the best-informed persons—a doctrine pretty nearly equivalent to one which should maintain every government to be more inimical to justice than entire anarchy. No escape can be found in the argument that ignorant men, in a democratic representative State, exercise political power only through educated representatives. This is only giving us ignorance at second hand. Here, then, the principle on which we have hitherto been arguing, of a simple regard to the ends of government, lands us in the conclusion that our only duty is to discover those who best know how right may be done in the State, and then entrust to them the sole government of the State.

But there is another principle deserving of our attention beside this of a regard for the ends of government. There is a principle claiming to be based on the ultimate grounds of morals, by which every rational being has a certain natural right to a voice in the government of the State of which he is a member. There is (according to this view) no room for inquiries respecting the ends of government. Nobody, for any end, however good, has a right to govern A. B. unless with A. B.'s consenting voice. No law can be morally binding on a man if he have had no share in making or upholding it. Ignorant or learned, rich or poor, it is all the same. The vote may be more or less judicious, or likely to be beneficial, but A. B. has a right to give it, and nobody is justified, by any pretence of public interest, in denying to him the exercise of such a right.

Here are surely set face to face the two great principles of politics for which we continually vainly contend in the dark. The dispute between the aristocrats and the democrats, since the world began, lies, not in the *application* of the principles of public utility and private right, but in the choice

between the principles themselves. Starting with the one, we can hardly fail to reach the conclusion that all power whatever in the State should be lodged in the hands of the best educated; starting on the other, we are equally sure to arrive at the result of universal suffrage.

Perhaps some glimmer of light may be seen through the darkness of the dilemma, if we look at it on this wise. There *is*, abstractedly speaking, a real moral right in every rational being to have a share in the government of the state to which he belongs. A perfect democracy is the ideally perfect government, and to approach as near as may be to such abstract moral principles is unquestionably our duty; hence the noble ethical ardour of liberal reformers with which our consciences all sympathise. But this abstract right to a share in state-government—or, as we may say, to political franchise—men have been compelled to postpone hitherto to the other principle of a regard to the end of government itself. In an imperfect and puerile condition of society, the claims of individuals were superseded by the general interest, and each man, in consideration of his share of the public benefit, was called on (in case of his own

incompetence for government) to relinquish his abstract ethical right to possess a voice in that to which he was obliged to submit. Such is the universal state of the case to the present day throughout the world, even in the most purely democratic States. The abstract principle of individual rights has never yet been carried out, nor even has it been proposed to be carried out in any one town or province. A Moral Right of this kind, if admitted, must be admitted absolutely, and can permit of *no* arbitrary restrictions afterwards. If every man of twenty-one is to have a vote *because he is a moral free agent*, why is not a man of twenty—a man of nineteen—nay, a boy, as soon as he has become morally responsible for his actions, to have a vote also? Is not the man of twenty a *"moral free agent"*? If he be so, we have no right to deny him his political franchise, and then urge the *"inalienable right"* of his brother of twenty-one. Expediency, and the necessity of drawing a line somewhere, are principles which, if admitted, lead us away utterly from our abstract rights, and straight to the opposite conclusion, that power, being given only to attain the great end

of government—namely, public justice—should be given only to those who understand the nature of justice. Why is the lad of twenty denied his vote? "Because he is not old enough to understand the questions to be voted about." But if he have a *right* to vote, nobody may lawfully deny it to him. Certainly, nobody may do so, and then turn round and argue that the ignorant man of twenty-one has a natural right, which no motives of expediency—no fear of stultifying the very purpose of all government, can permit us to refuse.

But there is still larger argument than this of age. Women are "moral free agents" assuredly as well as men. Their mental inferiority may be as great as it may please anyone to assert, but the *moral* right to political franchise of which we have been speaking, depends, not on any mental quality at all, but simply on *moral free agency*. If the principle be absolute, and every moral free agent have a natural right to a voice in the state, then assuredly women have this right as well as men. Yet the universal sense of mankind, with very few exceptions, has decided that the exercise of such a right by women would be inex-

pedient, and the consequence is that no serious attempt has ever been made to secure it for them. After this refusal of a right to half the human race, are we to argue for its admission to the other half, as if it were something too sacred to be sacrificed for any public interest? It is manifestly absurd that we should thus blow hot and cold in one breath. Either political rights form the sacred appanage of every moral being, and then every woman and every youth down to the first dawn of ethical responsibility in childhood, must have her and his claims admitted and recognised, never to be set aside for any expediency; or else the community is justified in drawing lines between those who may and may not exercise these rights, and then common sense demands that they be limited to the educated classes.*

* The question of the political rights of women is one which cannot here be discussed. It may be permitted me, however, to notice that, whether on the whole expedient or otherwise, their permanent disqualification for the franchise acts against them in a commercial manner which has been too little noticed. A multitude of widows and single women of the middle classes, very naturally desire to succeed their husbands, fathers, or brothers, in the tenancy of farms, small shops, and similar holdings throughout the country. In many cases, such women would be in all respects eligible

The sole legitimate answer to this line of argument is simply this, that it is *by the exercise of political freedom men become qualified to use it.* Few will trouble themselves much to learn what is the right of a case unless they are likely to have a voice in deciding it. To give a man a share in the government of his country is at least to prepare him to qualify himself for its use. The elevating effects of power, both for the highest and the lowest, are the needful preparations for

tenants. But, wherever the landlord of the farm or shop be a political partisan, a Member of Parliament, or desirous of carrying weight in elections, the woman's inability to use the vote which her holding would give, is cause sufficient (other things being equal) to determine her rejection. A woman must not only be as good a tenant as a man, but either a much better one, or else possessed of some quite irrefragable claim, to procure her acceptance by one landlord in ten. In the case of the higher class of ladies, holding landed estates, there are also many, although less important, injustices to be endured, arising from their disqualification to use the rights their property would convey to a man. I have known more than one such woman, able, cultivated, clear-headed, managing large estates with great judgment, well versed in the politics of the times, and associating habitually with the leading minds in various countries; yet these women were denied the rights possessed by the blacksmith who shod their horses, and never read a newspaper in his life, or travelled beyond the neighbouring village. If this difference be justified, let us hear no more of the abstract right of rational moral agents to a voice in the State to which they belong.

the exercise of power. We are shut up in a circle. The aristocrat may argue that he alone who possesses power should always keep it; and that the plebeian having never had it ought never to get it. The democrat, on the contrary, may argue that the plebeian should be given it precisely because by possessing it he will become capable of exercising it rightly. Very little doubt, I think, can exist, that this last is the true view of the case—that if we *can* give to all with safety the use of their natural rights to a voice in the state of which they are members, we are bound to do so; and the only problem which remains is *how* such power should be extended to the classes yet deprived of it. Not suddenly can this be done by any state to vast multitudes at once, else the original principle will be violated, and the end for which all government exists be frustrated. But by degrees, grade after grade downward may, by the exercise of political rights, learn to use such rights with safety to themselves and the community, till all be fitted for and in possession of their natural share of power, and the *à priori* "rights of man" and the proper ends of government both meet and be accomplished.

If such a view be correct, the question regarding such an institution as the law of Primogeniture is: How far will it aid or hinder such a final arrangement of the rights of all classes as we must now regard as the proper goal of our reforms? Will the existence of an hereditary landed aristocracy tend to keep up class prejudices, and crush down the efforts to rise of those beneath them with the dead weight of their steady influence? Or will such an aristocracy rather tend to elevate the whole community, and afford precisely that fixed standard of high feeling and good breeding which will be more and more needed as the lower classes assume their share of power, and *might* (without such balance) introduce grosser and coarser forms of manners?

The answer must depend on such an aristocracy itself. It *may* do the one thing or the other. As a general rule, each actual aristocracy in its better members effects the good, and in its worse the evil we have described. On the striking of the balance between benefit and injury must be decided the policy in each country of maintaining or suppressing such an order. The world cannot too soon recognise this fact, nor the upper classes

overywhere too seriously take it to heart. *Constitutional Governments*, thank Heaven! are not "on their trial," but the laws protecting an *hereditary aristocracy* are so nearly everywhere. Let it be hoped that neither in Italy or nearer home will the misuse of the great powers possessed by such a class to benefit mankind, cause those powers at last to be withdrawn, and the world deprived of refining and elevating influences which we must, perhaps, wait very long to find elsewhere.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### WILL ITALY GAIN VENICE AND ROME?

THE chances of the completion of the Kingdom of Italy by the annexation of Venice and Rome, are naturally matters of paramount interest to the nation. In every society they are discussed, and in every journal there are more or less formal allusions to them. The Army List includes sketches and plans of the fortifications of the Quadrilateral, as if they were the main concern of the troops. On hundreds of walls I have seen the words chalked up :—

"Liberiamo Venezia
E scacciamo lo stranier"—

as if they conveyed the only idea of the writers after the eternal "W. Vittorio Emanuele Nostro Rè." To what these chances may really amount it would, of course, be very absurd for a mere idle *forestiera* to guess. The following hints, col-

lected from men possessing the means of understanding the case, may, perhaps, however be of some use to the reader, who may desire materials on which to form his own judgment.

The want of Rome as a Capital for Italy, is one which presses with direful force on the whole nation. One of the great benefits derivable from national union is, a judicious and moderate system of centralisation. But centralisation, according to the modern plan, imperatively demands a capital where it may be seated with universal consent, and to the common convenience. Government, courts of civil and criminal law, the net-work of railways and telegraphs, the postal system, commerce, arts, science, social and courtly gaieties, all need a capital city. Let any one conceive what it would be to France that Paris should be held by a foreign power; or even to far less centralised England, that London should be severed from the nation, and that henceforth French government must be carried on at Marseilles or Amiens, and English government at Exeter or Carlisle, and some idea may be formed of the condition of a great nation of modern times obliged to dispense with a great capital. I say,

advisedly, a nation of *modern* times, became in earlier ages, nations (like some of the lower organised creatures, who can put forth a new head on the loss of the old one) were far less dependant than we are on their capitals. The *ganglia* of lesser towns supplied the brain centres of life and conscious activity. But in our day and stage of existence, every country must have a capital; and any country compelled to forego the use of its natural chief city, and make some inferior and ill-placed town the seat of its government, labours under incalculable disadvantages. Such is the present fate of Italy—a fate aggravated by the fact that it is a hostile power which holds Rome, and sends forth thence, from a focus of enmity, not only brigands to disturb one great province, but ecclesiastic spies and emissaries to fill every parish in the land with disaffection. Interest, obvious to every child, and most deeply felt by the wisest statesmen, pride, patriotism, resentment at the Papal conduct towards the new Kingdom—all these sentiments combine to goad Italians to struggle for Rome. Yet, on the other hand, the undertaking (so long as France is adverse) is so nearly hopeless, that the most auda-

cious spirits, since Aspromonte, have stood back appalled. Statesmen say that the matter is an *impasse*. Even if Napoleon desired to withdraw his troops (which is very doubtful), he dare not so far offend the *parti prêtre* in France. And so long as a single French regiment remains in Rome, the attack of the city by the Italians could only mean war with France, whose honour would be engaged in supporting her soldiers. War with France would be a calamity which Italy, at her present stage, dare not contemplate. Thus the "Roman Question" must remain an open one year after year, none may tell for how long. It does not in the least follow (as many English people expect) that Pio IX's death will set the city free. Before that event is heard of beyond the Vatican, it is certain the cardinals (who are known long ago to have agreed on his successor) will produce a new Pope, perhaps more powerful than the last. A revolution may break out at the time—nothing is more likely; but, unless Napoleon order his troops to give it way, the same terrible collision must arise. Rome itself would be too dearly bought by provoking the French to a contest of national honour. Much

more probable is it that the death of Napoleon, and a revolution in France, will be the solution of the Roman problem; but, even in such a contingency, it by no means follows that the future ruler of France will alter his predecessor's policy as regards Italy. Thus the nation stands for the moment baffled and well-nigh despairing.

There are those who think that this long procrastination of Italian hopes may not prove, after all, otherwise than beneficial. If the government, at present seated in Turin, could be removed at once to Rome, it is quite certain it would act with far less freedom—nay, that the priestly atmosphere of the Eternal City would be anything but wholesome for the Deputies to breathe. The cabals which have their permanent home in the Vatican would then have a great field of action; and it is very doubtful, if, after all, the kingdom would be as united in sentiment as it is now. More important still is the reflection that, so long as the Pope holds the Temporal Power against the wishes of the nation, and deprives them of their much-desired capital, so long he is incurring their detestation. Each day that Pio IX holds Rome, he loses his moral influence. By

and bye, if this continue a few years more, the hatred of the Temporal tyranny will extend to the Spiritual Power, universally in all Italian hearts; and *then* the two will fall with one mighty crash together. But, if the Pope were to abandon all that he holds against the desires of the people, and conciliate them by frankly accepting their programme of an United Italy, with Rome for its capital, *then*, on the other hand, he would remove the cause of animosity, the Spiritual Power would be separated in men's minds from the Temporal, and, heaven only knows how many ages more it might survive!

Turning from the insoluble Roman Question, Italians, during the last year, have mainly given their enthusiasm to the hopes of acquiring Venice. It is worth while to inquire on what these hopes are founded.

Italy may acquire Venice either, first by the aid of some potent military ally, whose aid shall give her the superiority over Austria; or, secondly, without an ally, by taking advantage of such a contingency as may leave Austria too much embarrassed elsewhere to cope with her on equal terms in the Quadrilateral. For the first

chance there are two countries whose alliance might suffice for the purpose—France and England. What are the probabilities of either of them affording to Italy the aid required?

The policy of France in Italy (which involves the question of Rome, as well as of Venice) seems to be somewhat on this wise.

In undertaking the war of 1859, to which the new kingdom owes its existence, Napoleon was doubtless urged by the great political interest of withdrawing the Peninsula from the influence of Austria, and bringing it under that of France. Romantic personal sympathies were very little likely to have weight in the councils of that astute sovereign, in comparison with an ambition which he may be said to have inherited with the crown of France, from all his predecessors since Charlemagne. For ages back, Austrian and French interests have struggled together in Italy. Only in 1849 did the star of Austria rise into an unquestionable ascendancy over the whole peninsula, leaving only to France the ungracious task of keeping garrison at Rome. Nothing is easier to understand than the motives of policy which induced Napoleon III to desire to give Lombardy

and Venetia to Piedmont, and thus, by excluding Austria from any territorial possession in Italy, destroy its influence generally, and substitute that which France could not fail to obtain from the gratitude of the nation. Stopped halfway in his work, the Emperor yet hoped, by his scheme of a Confederation of Italian States, to retain for himself the supreme arbitration of affairs. But the vast and generous movement in favour of a real national unity, which Italy effected, not only without French instigation, but (it cannot be doubted) against French intrigues, changed the face of affairs altogether. Instead of the separate little states, with unimportant armies which, like the sticks in the fable, Napoleon flattered himself he could break or bend one by one, at his pleasure, he found a strong *fasciculus* bound together by the cord of vigorous patriotism. The breaking and bending process was no longer feasible. Italy had suddenly become a real European Power, open perhaps to influence, but by no means subject to command. Almost immediately after this transformation had been effected, the questions of Rome and Venice assumed the positions of vital

ones between Italy and France. The reasons which make the possession of Rome so important for Italy have already been stated; and the position of France, as not merely negative, but as actually the opponent holding the city for the enemy, against the whole Italian and Roman people was one to exasperate all national feelings. Here, however, all attempts at negociation have failed, and the matter is as far from a conclusion as ever it has been. The Pope says: "Non possumus." The Emperor says: "In that case, non possumus also! What religion forbids to him, honour forbids to me." And the Italians seem very much inclined to say: "The grapes are sour. We shall be all the better for consolidating the kingdom before encumbering ourselves with Rome. Let us get all the limbs strong and active first, and then begin to treat the disorders of the national heart!" Meanwhile, for the moment, everybody looks to Venice. Like her own famous Jew, between his lost money-bags and his daughter, after alternately clamouring for one and the other, they have settled to the pursuit of the fair Bride of the Adriatic, ravished by Austria, and everybody shouts, cries, and scrib-

bles on the walls as aforesaid "Liberiamo Venezia e scacciamo lo stranier." The relation of this question to France is very different from the Roman one. In Rome, France is the obstacle of Italy; in Venice, she might possibly be the all-efficient ally. Will she condescend to become so in fact?

There seemed hope for Italy that it would be so when the Emperor last winter sent out his invitations for an European Congress. After warmly accepting the Emperor's scheme, Victor Emanuel desired Count Pasolini to ascertain from the French Government whether he was justified in anticipating a renewal of the policy of 1859. The answer of the Emperor, however, destroyed all such expectations. He announced very clearly, both in Paris and Turin, that he had no intention of actively co-operating with Italy in any attack on Venice, and that if such an attack were made, it must be entirely at the cost and risk of Italy herself. He added the advice that the king should forbear such an attack, but persevere in the formation of his army. To this counsel Italy adhered in both respects, and the relations of the two countries are perfectly

friendly and even cordial at this time. Still the position is a very peculiar one. Had Napoleon's plan of a Confederation succeeded, he would have found at his disposal a number of small, not very important allied armies. Now in United Italy he has to deal with a large power, actually independent, but (so long as Venice remains unconquered) driven to look to France for the great alliance, which alone is likely to turn the scale in her favour. France knows that if *she* attack Austria, Italy will fly to her aid with 300,000 men, while, on the other hand Italy may attack Austria and France remain perfectly undisturbed. Such a state of things, in which all the advantage of the alliance is on the side of France, is far too favourable for the Emperor to be willing to alter it without urgent cause. He has the cards in his hand, and will not be in a hurry to let them out of it. To aid Italy now in acquiring Venice, unless the benefit of France is somehow to be obtained thereby, would be at once to use up an important element of his Italian influence and to lose popularity in France. Another *disinterested* war on behalf of Italy (even with such pay in prospect as Sar-

dinia after Nice and Savoy) would not now be by any means agreeable to the French nation. *La Gloire* of descending from the empyrean of the Champs Elysées to free a suppliant Lombardy from the tyrant Austrian with the few magic touches of Magenta and Solferino was highly delightful to the imagination of the Grande Nation; and when the Parisian Jupiter and his hosts returned to the clouds at Villafranca, the cession of Savoy and Nice sufficed to complete national satisfaction. The acceptance of "*Un pauvre nid de rochers*" (as we have heard Frenchmen describe the glorious vales of loveliest Savoy and the sublime slopes of Mont Blanc) could not be supposed to tarnish the disinterested magnanimity of Gallic intervention in behalf of Italy. All was well so far, and it is probable that if the peninsula had meekly followed out the plan traced for her by her Liberator, and formed a Confederation of highly interesting but altogether powerless little States, as manageable as the divided bundle of sticks before mentioned, —then, indeed, French sympathy and gratulation would no doubt have continued to follow the not very alarming progress of Italian free-

dom. But wrong-headed Italy chose to form a single, powerful Kingdom, maintaining an army of 400,000 men, and holding up to the eyes of France, the possibility of great national prosperity and order under a form of government almost as purely constitutional as that of Albion the Detestable. Could French feelings be expected to remain true to the tricolor which bears green instead of blue, under such aggravating circumstances? Certainly not. If the Mediterranean is not to be a French Lake, at least it is to be hoped no power really able to cope with that of France will arise in the middle of it to flout her flag at every turn. A rival so near the throne as this,—another free England at her Southern shores, this would be, as Dogberry says, "Most tolerable and not to be endured." Accordingly Frenchmen habitually speak of Italian progress as a matter of no serious import, and their officers (as I have myself heard more than once) treat the idea of a great Italian army as altogether visionary. Still—for these poor fellows—it would be ridiculous to go to war again. France has other things to think of, in Mexico and elsewhere, than redeeming her

pledge of freeing the peninsula "from the Alps to the Adriatic." Nothing would be much more unpopular just now than for Napoleon III to send an army to aid Victor Emanuel in conquering Venetia and the Quadrilateral.

But if the French Emperor will not inaugurate a war in behalf of Italy, neither is it probable that he will ever suffer the new kingdom to be crushed by Austrian force. If a war should actually, against his wishes, break out between Austria and Italy, and Austria manifestly get the better, it is almost certain that the Emperor would interfere in time to prevent Austria from regaining her old supremacy in Italy, though very probably not in time to prevent the new Monarchy from falling to pieces, and the French scheme of a Confederation being once more brought forward.

Having discussed the hope of aid from France in the conquest of Venice, it remains to be asked if Italy may look to England for such practical assistance as might suffice to turn the scale against Austria? I find that no statesmen in Italy qualified to form an opinion on the subject entertain any such anticipations. At one

time the Italians thought a great deal of the English alliance, and valued it above the French, as certainly more disinterested if less practically efficacious. The character of the nation, especially of the Piedmontese portion of it—the "English of Italy" as they have been called—and our own, is in a thousand ways more *simpatico* than that of the Italians and French. The form of constitution adopted by the Italians of course leads them continually to regard with deep interest and fraternal pride the success of the same institutions in England. Added to these causes are the friendly feelings engendered by the presence of thousands of warmly sympathising English travellers in every town of Italy, spending their *lire sterline* almost as freely as Frenchmen spend francs, and often subscribing munificently to popular causes—Education or Garibaldian arms. Although these latter sources may have sometimes provoked other feelings than those of friendship, if the swarms of blonde Murray-studying foreigners be sometimes vexatious to the natives, whom they nearly squeeze out of the railways, galleries, and churches of their own country,—if English gold, however

welcome to the hotel keepers and *custodi*, be a formidable nuisance to the Italian gentleman, who finds his market raised for every commodity of life,—if the subscriptions of British dames be sometimes treated (as we have known a great Sicilian duchess describe a gift of £2000 to the schools of Naples) as "impertinent meddling,"—yet, on the whole, we need not doubt the general feeling of the Italian nation towards us is in the main a very kindly one. In politics, however, popular sentiments only form one element—and that not a very important one—in the decision of such practical questions as a great military expedition. Count Pasolini, in his reconnoitring visit to London, described himself as having met on all sides assurances of English sympathy and interest in the affairs of Italy—much more lively and general sympathy than he met in Paris. Nevertheless, when the question came, "How many thousand troops might your sympathy be induced to furnish us with, for the attack of Venice?" the response came with great precision, "None at all." Everybody in England, from Lord Russell downwards, is known to care intensely for Italy. Nobody doubts our since-

rity. Only we have taken lately to caring for oppressed nations, not in Cromwell's way, but in that of a certain order of Jewish philosophers frequently mentioned in Scripture, whose practice it was to say, "Be ye warmed and fed," but by no means to bestow the means of warmth and food on the objects of their benevolence. Doubtless we are all right. It would be a tremendous business, seriously to adopt for our motto the grand old text, "Deliver him that is oppressed from the hand of the adversary, and be not faint-hearted when thou sittest in judgment." In any case, as regards the Venetian question, no English Minister would be either justified in the equity of nations nor supported by the British Parliament, in allowing his sympathies with Italy to lead him to give armed assistance to an attack on Austria in her Venetian provinces. At the commencement of the Schleswig-Holstein war there seemed some probability that England, by adopting the quarrel of Denmark, would come in collision with Austria. The Italians hailed the prospect with many hopes, for in such a case their cause would have become our own. But the resolution once adopted to

let the Danes shift for themselves, of course leaves us with unbroken relations towards the Court of Vienna,—a Court we had begun, before this war, to regard with more favourable feelings, since its late efforts at constitutional government. England remaining neutral, the Austrian force employed against the Danes was by no means sufficient to weaken the Empire, or cause any drain from the garrison of the Quadrilateral, and, as Victor Emanuel observed, "the occasion did not come up to the point of such a crisis as might justify the single-handed attack of Italy."

Thus, not from "Non Intervention"-England, any more than from jealous France, can Italy look just now for aid in the enterprise she never ceases to proclaim as nearest her heart, the conquest of Venice.

But, if a regular alliance with one of the Great Powers will not serve the turn of Italy, it is perfectly possible she may accomplish her purpose by taking advantage of the movements of popular parties in Europe—nay, that the Republican party in Italy may drive the Government to the attack by arousing their *confrères* elsewhere to

disturbances, which would keep the hands of Austria too full at home to meet the Italian troops on fair terms in Venetia. The Hungarians, albeit they held back from aiding the Poles, are by no means disposed to final repose under Austrian rule, and one of their well-known leaders, who has been for some time residing in Turin and Florence, is supposed to be on the best understanding with the chiefs of the corresponding "Party of Action" in Italy, doubtless in readiness for any contemporaneous action which may seem desirable. Beside the Hungarians, all the non-German populations, from Dalmatia to Gallicia, even including the Servian and Danubian principalities, are (it is known from authentic sources) preparing for insurrection, and not ill supplied already with arms and money. Their agents are in continual activity, collecting supplies over Europe, and forming arrangements for simultaneous proceedings. If this plot come to successful issue, and Austria find herself like a house set on fire at many points at once, then Italy must and will undoubtedly arise. The government could not refuse, even if it were disposed to do so, the

popular enthusiasm for the war which such a state of things would create, and to abandon such a chance would be to perpetuate hopelessly that posture of affairs which the best Italian statesmen feel to be only endurable by the country as a temporary one—the maintenance of an enormous idle army without possession of a most important province of the Peninsula. The *prestige* would be lost for ever, and it is very doubtful if the Italian kingdom could long survive. Except the *parti prêtre* and *codini*, it appears that all shades of politics in the Italian parliament are united in this opinion, "Venice *must* be gained at the first good opportunity. We may wait awhile for that opportunity, but if it arrive, and we let it pass, it is over with the Kingdom of Italy." Venice is to be the bride, whose happy union is to settle the young and unsteady nation for ever. Till that matrimony is solemnised by a great Te Deum in St. Mark's (oh! how grandly it will peal through thos golden arches!) there is no coming to any family settlement, such as the state of the public purse most urgently requires. Then, when Austria is finally disposed of, the army may be placed on a

peace establishment (*only* about twice as great as that of mighty England), and then means may be found for checking the terrific budget before the national debt grows heavy enough to sink Italy in the sea.

Theoretically, in even the freest constitutional monarchy, it is the sovereign who decides the choice of peace or war, and, doubtless, practically, in the case of Italy, it will be Victor Emanuel whose voice will give the signal for the attack on Venice. Now, Victor Emanuel, as all the world knows, is essentially a soldier-king. His ugly coarse face and burly figure speak him the dragoon rather than either the gentleman or the sovereign. I shall not soon forget my first sight of him on horseback many years ago, as he rode beneath the balcony where I was standing—the very ideal of a trooper, such as in an old Flemish picture would be dressed with huge boots, and slouching hat, and jingling broad-sword. Yet he is not what Shakespeare would call a "swash-buckler," for there was no swagger—only simply a huge rough soldier, whose saddle was his proper throne. Very much does Victor Emanuel like

fighting, and sometimes he talks of it and of slaughter in a somewhat coarse and butcherly way, as if he rather enjoyed the idea of a field of carnage. From this side, then, it might be supposed there was everything in favour of the speediest call to arms. The king of classic Italy would rush down on the Quadilateral at the head of his people probably with as thorough enjoyment of the coming battle as some old Scotch or Irish cateran would have ridden before his clan brandishing his pike and screaming "Crom aboo!" or the yet more elevated war-cry of the Grahames, "Might before Right!" Still, there are reasons why Victor Emanuel as yet defers giving himself the pleasure of this glorious foray. One reason is, that he does not think his army is yet up to the work, or thoroughly amalgamated the one part with the other, so as to work harmoniously. Of this I have spoken already in Chapter III. Secondly, his present ministers are not warlike. Minghetti, the political economist, and Peruzzi, the suave and refined Tuscan, educated in the Ecole des Mines at Paris, are men of foresight and caution, rather suited to press forward ably the progress of Italy during

a time of peace than to launch it into war and hold the helm during the tempest. Ratazzi might be summoned once again, but he has shown himself to be a very indifferent statesman, and personally he is disliked, and perhaps somewhat despised since his marriage with the Princesse de Solms. Ricasoli, the upright and noble-minded patriot, has incurred the deep enmity of the King by his somewhat too rough and unbending behaviour, and his violent remonstrances against Victor Emanuel's private disorders. Thus, since the gifted Massimo d'Azeglio is doubtless too advanced in years to accept again the charge of office, there is not at present a clear case as to whom the King could substitute for Minghetti were he disposed to dismiss his present ministry and appoint another more willing to second his warlike propensities. Thirdly, there is a motive which is not very pleasant to think of, but which is suspected of influencing Victor Emanuel not a little in deferring a new campaign. Garibaldi *must* take part, and a very prominent part (unless his health break down) in any such war. The nation would not suffer him to be neglected. But even if the King loved

his great subject cordially, instead of regarding him with very different feelings, the relations between the Sovereign Commander-in-Chief and such a General under his command, would be anything but easy ones. The jealousy with which the King now certainly regards his laurels would then be increased a hundred-fold by immediate rivalry. The truth is, that, under all circumstances, the position of the Government towards Garibaldi is beset with difficulties. After the conquest of Naples, as is well known, they offered to him, with pensions and other honours, the Order of Annunziata, conferred on Ricasoli and Farini, who had likewise given provinces to Italy—a decoration which had raised them to a precedency over all the rest of the nobility. All these rewards Garibaldi declined, pressing only to be made Viceroy of Naples, or rather to be supported in the Dictatorship he already exercised. But the evidences he had given, during his short reign, of his inability to exercise such a function, rendered it nothing less than suicidal for any Government to bestow on him the place he coveted. Two acts alone, among many, were enough to show of what wild

imprudence he was capable—his dismissal of the whole Bourbon army, whereby troops which might easily have been rendered loyal subjects were converted into bands of brigands, and his appointment of the facetious mountebank, Alexandre Dumas, to the supreme Curatorship of the Museo Borbonico and Pompeii, with a palace and a table of forty covers a-day at the public cost. These two acts alone, we say, were quite enough to warn any government against committing its interests to the hands of the man who could be at once so impolitic and so absurd. True, Garibaldi was a hero who had won Naples with his own right hand, and then given it to his King, like a knight of old. Nothing in modern times surpasses the romance of the meeting of the chief and the monarch when the work was done, and Garibaldi saluted Victor Emanuel for the first time by the title long coveted by Italian hearts, "*Rè d'Italia!*" But if that gift of a kingdom were not to be a mockery—if it were not to be made into a misfortune for Naples and a jest for Europe, it was needful to deny to the donor the Viceregency he demanded. The Italian government must stand absolved for its refusal

before all right-thinking men. Yet not the less has that refusal, and Garibaldi's resolution to accept no other reward, been a most serious misfortune. Henceforth, even before Aspromonte, Garibaldi enjoyed all the dangerous privileges of one who is at once the saviour and the martyr of his country. The relations of the government with him can never be otherwise than difficult, even were he a man more safe from dangerous counsels such as made him last winter resign his seat in Parliament, or less addicted to publishing erratic manifestoes. Such a man *may* be (and Garibaldi assuredly *is*) a great and true hero, but he is also a very formidable personage, with whom a jealous King, and a cabinet in the difficulties of a life-and-death war, might have to count. It is a disagreeable reflection, but perhaps a true one, that had Garibaldi's wound proved a permanent disablement, Victor Emanuel might have made more haste than now he is disposed to do to attack the Quadilateral and rescue Venice from Austria.

## CHAPTER IX.

### WILL ITALY LOSE NAPLES?

NAPLES, till 1860, offered a delightful example of the result of thoroughly Conservative principles in Politics, Religion, and Æsthetics. Naples never had a republican Revolution, a Reformation, or a Renaissance. The various waves which swept over Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, died away upon the shores of her lovely bay, and left not a ripple on the sands of time. Changes of Dynasties there were—Saracen and Norman first, Angevine and Arragonese afterwards, wise kings like William the Good, evil ones like William the Bad, murderous queens like Joanna (the Mary of Scots of the South), and turbulent demagogues like Massaniello, corrupt and cruel viceroys followed by yet more corrupt and cruel kings, servants of Bourbons, and Bourbons themselves.

But never a Republic, like those of Florence, Venice, Genoa,—never a Commonwealth like that of England, Holland, Switzerland, America,—never even a great moral earthquake, like the first French Revolution, to right the wrongs of a thousand years and level the Bastilles of despotism with the ground. As to Religion, Naples has known no change since the Dark Ages; she has had no Luther, no Calvin, no Latimer, no Savonarola. Even for Art, she has had no Revival—there is no Neapolitan School of Painting, or Sculpture, or Architecture,—no Raphael or Titian; no Michael Angelo or Bramante. No Poet has arisen to sing the fairest land on which the sun ever shone—there has never been a Dante or a Tasso, not even an Ariosto or a Petrarch of Naples. Vesuvius' lava is not more barren of fruits and flowers than the whole soil of South Italy of Liberty, Religion, Art, and Literature.

Is this loveliest land, where fable has placed the Elysian Fields, but where History only shows a Sybaris and a Capri, is it to have no nobler Future than its dishonoured Past? What is to become of Naples in the Third Era, which we

hope may succeed in Italy the empires of the Cæsars and of the Popes? The first question to be decided is manifestly this. Will the Bourbons be restored? If they will, what may be the result? If they will *not*, how will the new régime affect the population, of which the wild shepherds of the Abruzzi, the brigands of Calabria, the lazzaroni of the Chiaja and the Chiatamone, are the types wherewith alone our English imaginations are familiar, but which assuredly must contain many far better and more hopeful elements? The following remarks, derived from the observations of those best qualified to form a judgment on the matter, may afford a clue to our anticipations.

The condition of Naples previous to Garibaldi's Expedition, was one which in the nature of things could hardly long have been sustained. Even uttermost Japan in the far East has found it impossible to resist for ever the aggressions of modern ideas and European civilisation; and for a country to maintain a small slice out of the Dark Ages within sixty hours of Paris, and seventy of London, was as difficult an achievement as to "make believe" it is night by closing the shutters and drawing the blinds at noon. Through

every chink and cranny pours the blessed daylight, and by every train and steamer and mail-bag the current feelings of the age enter into a country and pervade the minds of men, be they ever so carefully guarded against them. No *Dogana* in the world can keep out a contraband idea, and no passports are needed for the free-travelling of a sentiment.

The reaction towards despotism, which followed after the great French Revolution everywhere in Europe, was singularly powerful in Naples. The downfall of Murat and the restoration of the Bourbons was the signal for the effacing of every step of progress which had been made during the eighteenth century, from the accession of the wise and liberal Charles III. Ferdinand II, on his return, established a system of despotism as complete as could well be devised. He kept a strong corps of foreign soldiers; not merely an ornamental body-guard of Swiss, like those of the Pope and the King of France, but a formidable troop of unscrupulous mercenaries, forming the nucleus of a large native army. He maintained a secret Police, whose duty it was to watch and denounce all persons addicted to the danger-

ous practices of reading, writing, or *thinking* on matters of religious or political reform. He conciliated the lowest class of the populace, and especially the 70,000 lazzeroni of Naples, by every possible indulgence,—his well-filled Treasury enabling him to display towards them the most paternal liberality. He gagged the native press in an effectual manner, and did his best to shut out the productions of that of other countries. He formed an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Romish priesthood, especially with the Jesuits, and confided to them the task of superintending the whole education of the people, and keeping it within those narrow bounds which best might coincide with a condition of spiritual and political thraldom. Such a system, carried on to completion in the reign of the late king, was assuredly as sagacious as ingenuity could have devised, and as the most unscrupulous disregard of the moral interests of a nation could have borne out. Whether this regimen of the strait-waistcoat would have long continued to keep the patient quiet, had no external circumstances interfered, is a matter of no very great interest. Garibaldi's invasion having

loosened the strings, Naples started up, announced herself as perfectly well able to dispense with such treatment; and the experiment terminated, for the time at all events, in the signal discomfiture of the doctors. The question which really concerns us is, whether there be any chance of another Bourbon Restoration? Will Italy hold together, or will Naples separate herself, and so destroy for ever the hopes of Italian Unity? It is a matter of intense interest, for on the loss or maintenance of Naples and Sicily must depend the prospects of the other five provinces. There can be no Kingdom of Italy without them. Let us pass *seriatim* in review the probabilities of the case.

1. Will there be a Restoration by force of arms? Some time ago there seemed some prospects of this. The Brigand robberies and murders, like all crimes committed on a sufficiently large scale, ceased to be called by those humble names, and were elevated to the rank of "Guerilla Warfare." Europe heard a good deal of these "soldiers" loyally fighting for "their exiled monarch," for his beautiful Queen, for the Madonna, and perhaps also for plunder; and

"Gentle Zitellas," who desired to spend a little English gold by the shores of Naples, were requested to "banish their fears," and consider the whole thing purely political. Bombalino himself being courteously entreated by the French ambassador to leave Rome and give no more trouble, replied in a formal address (which was printed at the time), that he did not consider any complaints about brigandage touched him at all. His faithful people did perfectly right to stand out in arms against the usurping government of Victor Emanuel, and he was not the man to condemn them. Living in Rome at the time, we can well remember tales current on all hands, and some of them perfectly authenticated, proving that the justification of the brigands was not a barren moral judgment on the part of the King, but followed up by such assistance in the way of clothes and money as very fairly might claim in return the obedience of paid soldiers, as well as the allegiance of loyal citizens. There was, in fact, *merely* the peculiarity in the Neapolitan "Guerilla" corps, that they levied the royal "taxes" in the somewhat irregular manner of highwaymen. All this, however, has changed

of late. Brigandage, if ever pursued from high political motives and loyal devotion, has gradually become a trade like another, and Carusso and Crocco would, we believe, have been nearly as much astonished at being looked upon as martyrs to the cause of Francis II, as one of our garotters to that of Chartism. The young painter Gutzlaff, not long ago seized on the road to Castellamara, and held captive for six days by these heroes, received from them the assurance that in the matter of politics they maintained the most perfect philosophic indifference, and cared nothing whatever who should possess Naples so long as scudi might be securely extracted from incautious or overconfident travellers. On another occasion, a bridegroom, on his way to his wedding, being seized by the noted brigand chief Crocco, endeavoured to soften his captors by assurances of his entire devotion to the cause of Francis II. To all his protestations, however, Crocco only replied that Francis and Victor Emanuel were equal in his sight, but a good rich *proprietario*, who might afford a heavy ransom, was at all times welcome, to which ever side he might belong.

2. There is a Bourbon party, undoubtedly of considerable numerical force, throughout the Neapolitan kingdom, from whom something might be hoped in the way of a Restoration. There are nobles attached by hereditary sentiments to their legitimate sovereign; and there are ex-employés by the hundred, whom the present Government, with all its willingness to engage their services, have wisely excluded from even such trust as the place of a post-master might imply. All these make up in mere numbers a pretty large sum; but practically they are of small importance. They make little attempt to influence the course of events, and they gradually merge into the mass of liberals. In the last municipal elections, they attempted to try their strength, but utterly failed; and, according to the avowal of the Duca T——, one of the chief men among them, and an ex-minister of Francis II, they barely could count fifty persons of their party whose character and position gave them importance. The great majority of the loyal nobility followed the king into exile, and have either remained with him in Rome, or dispersed themselves in foreign countries. In case of a

Restoration, these would of course return to Naples, and the result would be a great additional brilliancy in the society of the city—more equipages in the streets, and more diamonds in the ball-rooms. But these courtier-nobles have very little political importance—very little habit, in fact, of meddling with politics at all, beyond the composition of good stories calculated to turn into ridicule the party of their enemies.

3. The Clergy are in great measure devoted to the cause of Francis II; as well they may be, considering that his dynasty has been the best of friends to the whole system of ultramontane Catholicism. The Neapolitan people, also, unquestionably form (with the Irish) the most devoutly believing branch of the Roman Church. But even these sources of power are failing. So long as St. Januarius' blood is duly liquefied every year, and the Sacraments available to all, whether brigands or peaceful citizens, the nation interests itself little in the intrigues of the sacristy—least of all, now that the alienation of the revenues of the monasteries deprives the Church of that Power of the *Purse*, which is at least equally influential with the

"Power of the Keys". Education, which is progressing with giant strides in Naples, is of course a still more formidable foe to priestly authority. Hitherto the masses have been compelled to believe whatever their teachers told them: and wonderful, indeed, were the fables which these shepherds imposed on their flocks. We may imagine what they were concerning *remote* events and doctrines, when we find that even concerning such a matter as the actual present existence of a King of Italy, they had the effrontery to publish the falsehood that no such personage existed, and that the man who this winter performed a royal progress through the country was no King, but a person engaged by the Piedmontese to personate that mythical character! A gentleman who accompanied the Court on the occasion, informs me that the peasants were continually to be observed holding up centesimi and francs bearing the King's image, and comparing it with equal surprise and satisfaction with the unmistakable countenance of Victor Emanuel, as he rode through the streets: "There is really a King of Italy; and here he is, after all!" The same gentleman was immensely

struck at the absence of any symptom of hostility to the King, such as might have arisen from priestly or Republican prejudices; and declares that, though constantly in a situation to observe such demonstrations, he never once heard a hiss, or saw the slightest mark of disloyalty.

4. The Mazzinian party might, perhaps, do somewhat to disturb the actual government, but only with the aid of Garibaldi; and this aid Garibaldi will hardly be induced to give them. Wild as are his written manifestoes, he will be very unwilling to undo the action on which his glory hereafter must chiefly depend.

5. The Press, being free in Naples as elsewhere in Italy, might perhaps be used as an instrument of Bourbon influence, *if* the art of reading were sufficiently widely diffused to give it the power it possesses in other European countries. But despotism has overreached itself here, as in so many other matters. It has put out the nation's eyes, that it might lead it more easily; and now stands vainly making signs for it to follow from a distance. In the city of Naples, with half a million of inhabitants,

there are only two newspapers of any sort of importance—the *Pungolo* (the Spur), and the *Italia,* both liberal; the latter a Government journal. Besides these, the Bourbon party, the Clergy, and the Mazzinians, altogether, do not furnish a single periodical of the slightest importance. They only publish wretched half-penny sheets; sometimes abusing the Government in coarse and stupid phrases, sometimes indulging in mere lampoons, but never ascending to a single serious argument of political or theological discussion.

6. The Mob of Naples may be considered a somewhat formidable body, probably attached to the Bourbons, who showed it a fostering kindness worthy of no small gratitude, and liable also, after the manner of mobs, to sudden revolutions of sentiment. Masaniello's exploit—Garibaldi's conquest, might possibly, it is thought, be repeated in the interest of Francis II. A Demonstration of the 70,000 lazzaroni which that amiable monarch left behind him, would at all events have a fair chance of upsetting the throne of the House of Savoy, yet very imperfectly fixed, in Naples,—and Naples the *City* is Naples the

*Country*, the one follows the other even more certainly than France follows Paris. Perhaps the danger after all lies here, and Brigands, Nobles, Priests, Newspaper Editors, and Mazzinians, are all unimportant compared to that *sans-culotte* population who bolt Macaroni under the Chiaja! Yet hardly so. First, without too much offending these gentry, the actual government has done much to reduce their numbers, to employ them (men and women both) on railway works, and to stop begging in the streets. The spirit of the corps is at once soothed by the unchanged exhibition of St. Januarius, and controlled by the yet more remarkable sight of 16,000 *Guardia Nazionale*, perfectly well armed and disciplined, and so securely attached to the existing Government, that the Prefect considers the city safe under any contingency without the aid of the regular army.

There are discontents at Naples as elsewhere throughout the country. There is the eternal complaint that Turin, the remote, the upstart Turin, where Italian is a foreign language and the barbarous Piedmontese alone is heard, is the capital of Italy,—not Rome, the Imperial,

not Naples the Beautiful, not Florence the City of the Arts. Men rose three years ago to the call of an United Italy, and Tuscany, Lombardy, the Romagna, and the Two Sicilies, gave in their adhesion with acclamation. But that "United Italy", whose vision was to them all like Constantine's banner in the clouds,—a sign in which they found strength to conquer foreign foes and private feuds, and local jealousies and personal interests, in a victory which will long count among the most glorious in history—that "United Italy" was an Italy not only stretching from the Alps to the Gulf of Manfredonia, but throned on the Seven Hilled City, and wearing the regalia of the Cæsars. It was an United Italy *with Rome for its capital.* How far any of the new provinces would have consented to join Piedmont had they foreseen that for years to come it was, in fact, only an extended Piedmont, with Turin for capital, which was to be created, is very doubtful. By good fortune, however, the future was veiled, the union took place, and like other married parties, if they find themselves somewhat *desillusioné,* they still have no desire for any such

strong measure as a divorce. Italy may go on for years to come in the condition of a creature who has no proper brain-centre of life and power—no *cerebrum* of a Capital like Rome, only such *ganglia* as Palermo, Naples, Florence, Milan, and at the top the specially active little nerve-knot of Turin. Are the Neapolitans more angry than the other townsmen at the descent from a capital to a provincial city? Is it worse to lose a King—if it be a cruel and crafty Bomba, than a Grand Duke—if it be a mild and well meaning Leopoldo Secondo? It does not seem so. Naples is no more discontented—so far as the lack of Royalty is concerned—than Florence. If there exist there, as elsewhere, some soreness at being obliged to look to upstart Turin as capital, it is assuaged by the intimate conviction that it is only the absence of power, not of excellent good will, which prevents Victor Emanuel from establishing himself to-morrow in the city of the Seven Hills.

Some trouble has also arisen as to the Conscription. In Sicily there are said to be no less than 20,000 *refractories* who have sought to evade the lot; and in the Neapolitan provinces

there are also a vast though (in proportion) lesser number. The government pursues such defaulters vigorously, and punishes them with imprisonment for a time before transmitting them to their regiments. When once enrolled, however, they appear, as usual, to undergo the influence of the large body in which their individuality is merged; and the Neapolitan soldier, no less than the Tuscan and the Piedmontese, is contented and well pleased with his service. The Bourbon cause would have nothing to hope from this quarter.

Francis II has done somewhat since his exile to raise his personal character in the opinion of men. It is believed, perhaps on good grounds, that if now restored to his throne, he might form an exception to the practice of his House, and have both learned and forgotten somewhat which returning kings ought to learn and to forget. Will the Neapolitans, then, be induced by and bye, when wearied of the Piedmontese yoke, to recall their legitimate king? Will some new General Monk, bring back this new Charles II? It does not seem likely. The qualities and concessions which might have sufficed to keep

Francis on the throne, are not of that greater and more brilliant kind which might restore him when banished. He represents to the minds of his subjects (and must always do so, unless he have a chance to shew his better intentions) the system of arbitrary despotism,—of jesuitry,—of broken public faith. The son of the man who took and broke all the oaths of 1848-49, has no right to expect credit for liberal designs or reliance on any promises of constitutional government. A return of an emigrant court and nobility is a thing of which experience in many countries has shewn the inconvenience. The train of revengeful acts, of jealousies, distrusts, dismissals from office, and removal from private posts of wealth and influence,—who shall calculate? To contemplate such an event is enough to remind us of the French charlatan, who in the last century scattered dismay in some town in the South by announcing (at the close of some clever tricks of juggling, cutting off heads and putting them on again, etc.), that on a certain day he would proceed to the churchyard, and bring back to life everybody who had been buried therein during the last fifty years. After

hurried and anxious consultations, the Mayor and Notables of the place sought the conjuror's abode, and offered him a considerable sum of money if he would forbear from the performance of an experiment which would cause all the property of the town to pass from its possessors to their predecessors. The intelligent gentleman (after having naturally stipulated for a still larger bribe), graciously consented to give up his intentions, and the resurrection of the deceased citizens was postponed *sine die*. We are of opinion that if a return of the Bourbons were in question, there would be found more people ready to stave off the disaster by some similar expedient, than to welcome them back with such idiotic demonstrations as greeted the Restoration of the not more hopeless race of the Stuarts.

The simple truth is, that Francis II has nothing to offer which Victor Emanuel is not actually giving to the Neapolitans. Constitutional government, freedom of the press, vast sums expended in education, and on railways and public works of all kinds; there is not only possession—possession supported by a powerful and loyal army, and

in face only of the indifference and *laissez-faire* of a Neapolitan population, but also positive and great benefits bestowed every day upon the country. Between 70,000,000 and 80,000,000 of francs are now spending annually by the Italian government in Naples and Sicily over and above the revenue derived from those provinces, for the exclusive advantage of the people; and the poor Communes, accustomed only to view the powers above them as mysterious agencies for the collection of imposts and punishment of liberal ideas, receive with amazement not unmingled with distrust, the splendid grants afforded to them for local improvements of all kinds. The wisest of all these aids, that which has opened Schools, elementary and normal, all over the country, is preparing a firmer basis every day for the government which befriends knowledge, and is the sole possible representative of the great idea of Italian Unity. The study of history and of the present constitution of the country, which is made a part of this education, cannot fail to awaken in the minds of the new generation, a rational attachment to existing freedom, a well-grounded horror of the

divided, and despot-ridden past, which shall effectually guard them from any sudden enthusiasm for a Reaction. Every day a return to the old order of things becomes more unlikely, and in a few years it will be impossible. Once the former division walls of petty states have been a little overgrown by those flowers of kindly feelings which are sure to spring up wherever human barriers are thrown down, their very existence will be forgotten, and their erection again will be out of question. At the same time the importance of forming part of a great nation, secure of its independence and possessing weight in the affairs of Europe, will fix itself in the minds of Italians, and none will be found to forego the pride and the actual advantages of such a condition for the trifling local benefits of a Minor State.

Of this Unity of Italy Victor Emanuel is the visible personification. In his government and dynasty lie all the hopes of its final success. If he fail, and Italy fall to pieces again in his hand, scarcely a hope will remain of ever reuniting the fragments. The Italians know this, and recognise in him the hope of their country. If his

personal character leaves much to be desired, his merits are yet of a kind enabling him to bear the weight of the confidence of a nation, and his faults are of the sort most easily pardoned in a country where private morals have never been cast in the scale of judgment of public men. Victor Emanuel himself knows how much depends on him as the King of an United Italy, and on his submission to the restrictions of a Constitution, that he may exercise the functions of such a king, nor sink to the level of the autocrats he has displaced. There is small danger that either king or people will forego, for any temporary interest or passion, the high career which mutual fidelity opens before them. Unless some unforeseen political storm arise to change the face of things, the course before them is safe enough. The army, every day more perfectly fused into one, will not suffer division; the Parliament, whose whole power rests on the unity of the kingdom, will not swerve from its aim; the vast body of *impiegati*, stationed in every town and village of the land as the paid servants of the Government, will secure all the machinery of the State for the Sovereign. A rupture with

France; an unsuccessful attack on Austria, followed by heavy defeats; an outburst of popular fanaticism for the Pope—these might, indeed, present formidable dangers; but none of them are probable, the last scarcely possible. The death of Victor Emanuel himself would be of little consequence, since his son, Prince Humbert, appears in every way qualified to take his place. In the carnival of the present year, 1864, his liberality and splendour at Naples produced a most advantageous impression in his favour; and the Roman Court beheld with uttermost jealousy the *forestieri*, who should have lined the Corso and kept up the illusion of a contented and flourishing population in Rome, lured away to display their dominos and throw their *confetti* on the Chiaja and the Toledo, and attending the entertainments which made Naples for the moment the gayest city in Italy. There is even a younger prince of the House of Savoy, on whom the nation, on an emergency, might fairly rely. The horizon, then, actually presents *no* cloud of any magnitude threatening the stability of the present union of Naples with Piedmont in one Kingdom of Italy. Of course, where human

foresight fails, there ever remains the great book of the unknown and unknowable future, whose pages, for all we can tell, may be all covered with warning and disaster.

## CHAPTER X.

### "'TIS MASERONI HIMSELF WHO NOW SINGS."

IT is a favourite popular delusion that some sort of crimes and vices have in them a good deal of æsthetic merit, that they are, on the whole, rather noble things, much more noble than hum-drum every day honesty and virtue. The passion of Rage, for instance, as represented by tragic actors and novelists, is altogether superb and imposing, very different from the piteous and hideous reality of an actual man or woman, with distorted features and disharmonised voice, undergoing the tyranny of their irascible natures to the shame of the true humanity within them. The career of English thieves and convicts, we have likewise seen glorified into romance in books, and treated, by those who know nothing of it practically, as a field where courage and super-ordinary talent and cleverness are constantly displayed, instead of

being, as in truth, a miserable alternation of grovelling fears and filthy pleasures, undergone by a poor wretch on whose crushed forehead and animal physiognomy we may read at a glance the low propensities and short-sighted cunning of the brute, for whom all the nobler joys and wisdom of humanity are yet to dawn. If there be one crime more than another, however, to which romance has attached itself, and "distance lent enchantment to the view," it is assuredly Brigandage. A Bandit, a true Neapolitan "Brigante," with a peaked hat, a belt full of pistols, and an image of the Madonna round his neck, is a delicious bit of the Middle Ages, preserved for the ecstasy of mankind into the Nineteenth Century. When it is added that he is a "faithful adherent of his exiled monarch," living in daily peril of the muskets of the "brutal Piedmontese," we feel that every condition is fulfilled which can recommend him to the sympathies of a judicious public. Of course he must (alas!) be eventually put down and terminate his lawless, but gallant and interesting, career, with a dozen balls in his breast like a brave soldier. Meanwhile, it is impossible not to think of him with some kindliness, not to

say admiration. The vulgar London garotter, who may meet us this evening round the corner of our own street and give us a choke which shall stop our respiratory processes for the future altogether, is a wretch for whose back the cat is a proper application. But a Brigand among the far away blue Appenines, descending through the cypresses and perfumed orange groves, to carry away into his romantic haunts some rich traveller, who will pay ample ransom, half to be devoted to the Madonna and half to the poor, this Robin Hood of Calabria, is a very different character. Not young ladies alone may be willing to act "Gentle Zitellas" to such "Maseroni"; but men who ought to know better, speak of them with only half-concealed indulgence; and the Church of Rome and *Codino* party every where, to their eternal shame, beyond a doubt, favour the ruffians. Let us try to get some small *aperçu* of the truth of the case, partly from the Report of the Commission of last spring, and Monnier's *Histoire du Brigandage, Il Brigantaggio*, by Conte Alessandro de Saint Jorioz, and also later, from authentic private sources on which the reader may rely.

The ultimate source of regular Crime, is Pauperism. Hunger and hopelessness are two counsellors, who more than any others lead men to defy laws which for them are not protectors but enemies. Throughout a considerable part of the Neapolitan territories there has been for centuries back an ever-increasing misery among the peasants. The *caffoni*, as they are called, the *terrazzani*, who have no habitation whatever, and sleep like wild beasts, as the chance of each night may lead them to a lair, these miserable beings, at the best of times, are on the borders of starvation. The lands (cultivated sometimes on a large scale by absent Proprietors), offer them only fields of occasional toil, with a remuneration so pitiful that it barely suffices to procure for them bread, of which (a visitor says) a dog would hardly eat. The causes which have led to this state of things mount back to a distant time and the overthrow of the feudal barons; nay, possibly, may have been going on for many centuries before; but the fact which alone concerns us is this present and wide-spread misery. Throughout all the disturbed districts, the peasantry are next door to starvation—in the small one of Foggia alone there are actually *thou-*

*sands,* as Massari testifies, of the houseless *terrazzani*—and the proof of the connection between distress and brigandage is found in the circumstance, that, where the railways or other great public works have afforded employment and food for the people, the brigandage has disappeared.

Besides this great cause, there are many lesser ones, which have caused Brigandage to break out since the Annexation, as no longer an endemic disease but an epidemic. Ferdinand staved it off by favouring the lazzaroni and populace, and still more by everywhere enrolling the men, qualified by character and courage to become bandits, in his own army, where they had many privileges and acted on the principle of the thief set to catch a thief. All this was exchanged under the new regime for an organised Opposition, the ex-king and the clergy favouring instead of repressing the brigandage. At first, bands of honourable soldiers were sent in guerilla fashion from Gaëta, under men like Count Emile de Christen and General Luvará. Very soon these degenerated; Tristany and Borgés were succeeded by men like Carusso, and all form of lawful war-

fare was abandoned by mere robber outlaws. Yet these robbers continued to receive supplies of money and arms from the king and the *Comitato Borbonico*, together with the immense moral encouragement of feeling they possessed such friends, and that their chiefs were honoured by royal warrants. The priesthood, above all, kept up the flame. For the *Italian soldier*, indeed, there was no absolution, no sacraments of the dying; but for the *bandit* there were relics in abundance for charms, "*la Messa dei briganti*," and every passport the Church could afford to the celestial kingdom. To understand the power of such ecclesiastical influence we need to recall how utterly in Italy Religion and Morality have been dissevered for ages, and how Religion to the uneducated Italian *means* nothing but the sacerdotal enchantment whereby he is to escape from future fires. Give him his *olio santo* passport to bliss, and religion has done for him all it is qualified to do. Of reformation of life, or purification of heart, of love to God or man, he has no more thought when he speaks of religion than if he were talking of the boat which is to ferry him across the river, or the carretta to take

him to the neighbouring town. Religion is a machine for getting to heaven, and avoiding hell and purgatory. Having paid the passage money at the proper bureau, and received his ticket, his concern with it is over. He is "booked through," with the security of the official signature.

The result of all these concomitant influences was the true Brigand of the Carusso type—a wretch whose business was plunder, and whose amusement cruelty—whom no human or divine law touched in any way, and yet who doubtless went through his life of crime perfectly secure that he was in favour with his legitimate earthly sovereign and the Vicegerent of Christ, and that when shot down at last by Piedmontese bullets, he was secure of admission into the paradise of God. The career of such a man has in it something hideous to think of. The more cruel he was, the more all around him trembled and obeyed; the satisfaction of his tiger passions of lust and bloodshed was actually a part of his policy. On one occasion he entered a *tenuta* (farm) where fourteen poor labourers were resting inoffensively; with a razor, Carusso cut the throats of thirteen like so many defenceless sheep,

and then bade the last, who held his neck in his turn, go off and repeat what he had seen.* Another time, he seized three or four poor women, and left their burnt and mutilated corpses on the road, where they were found by the Marchese de Casanova in a condition too horrible to be described. Yet fiends like this go to their work with images of the Madonna and relics of saints round their necks, and with the powder for their murderous weapons bearing on each packet the official stamp of the Papal Manufactory at Tivoli,—the triple crown of St. Peter, the "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven"! The Marchese de Casanova, Commandant of the Guardia Nazionale at Benevento, and engaged in the suppression of brigandage, testified to my informant, not only that he had seen this Papal stamp on the ammunition taken from the bandits, but that he had known one of them, when led to execution, curse in his despair the priests who, when he had abandoned robbery and settled peacefully to an industrious life, had urged him

* This story was told by Count Robilant, aide-de-camp of Victor Emanuel, to his Excellency Count Usedom, from whom I hold it.

to go forth again and rejoin his band of assassins. Others of the brigands seem to carry their resentment further against the ecclesiastical body, since the brothers *La Gala*, taken in the *Aulis*, were convicted at Naples (March, 1861) of having roasted and *eaten* an unfortunate priest who had fallen into their hands. For this, as well as for many other atrocious murders, they were condemned to death, and the Emperor Napoleon, having no desire to be the protector of cannibals, permitted their execution.

Marvellous to relate, among these detestable savages were found more than one gentleman of birth and station from distant countries, actually allured to Naples by the prospect of joining in the feats of brigandage. The following are sketches of some of these gentlemen of singular taste, from the rare volume of Conte Alessandro Bianco de St. Jorioz.

Marquis Alfred de Trazégnies, of Namur in Belgium, a volunteer in Chiavoni's band, with the rank of superior officer; acted as captain 11th Nov., 1861, at the attack of Isoletta. Taken prisoner with arms in his hands, he was shot the

same day with some of his followers by a picket of the 43rd regiment. He was a man of about thirty, of handsome and distinguished presence, and easy and noble manners; tall and pale, with black beard and hair, elegantly dressed in a hunting costume. He wore a revolver, a magnificent dagger, and a carbine. In the interrogatory to which he was subjected before his death, he narrated the motives which had induced him to leave Brussels, and stated that he had reached Rome in the beginning of October with recommendations to the Abbate Bryan, and on the 7th Nov. had set forth of his own free choice to join the band of Chiavone. Before dying, he wrote a letter, in which he mentioned his relationship with the Contessa di Montalto, wife of the Ambassador of Italy at the Court of Belgium. It appears that Marshal St. Arnaud and his brother married two cousins of the Marquis de Trazégnies, who is further stated to have been the nephew of De Mérode and of the Countess of Nassau. In his pocket-book were found literary and scientific memoranda, an affectionate letter from his sister, a lock of hair, and the portrait of a most beautiful and noble lady. A fortnight after his ex-

ecution, a French deputation arrived, composed of Major Grégoire, commanding the troops at Frosinone, Captain Bauzil, and the Abbate Bryan, accompanied by hussars and guides, and furnished with authority from the French Commandant in Rome for the exhumation of the body of the Marquis de Trazégnies. When the corpse was disinterred, the Abbate Bryan (doubtless an Irishman) manifested high disdain that it should have been placed with the remains of three or four ragged ruffians of his band. The Italian captain, who had shot de Trazégnies, thereupon remarked, "that he had only given him in death the same company he had freely selected in life." The Abbate argued no more, but observed that at all events the deceased brigand was a "*good Christian*" ("che pure era stato un buon Cristiano")!

"ZIMMERMANN is a man of twenty-seven years of age, ex-lieutenant in the Austrian army. He has a mind and sentiments naturally elevated, and is more artist and poet than soldier. He paints in a masterly manner, writes verses, sings and plays on several instruments, and is exceedingly effeminate in his habits. In a word, he was

not made for a brigand; but he is an original who thinks it poetical to be the chief of a band of German ruffians, and to scour the mountains in search of emotions, picturesque views, and pretty peasant girls."

"DON JOSÈ BORJÉS, formerly a captain serving in the War of Succession in Spain; he was a man of honour and feeling, deluded by the reactionary party in Rome—the Don Quixote of a lost cause. On the 7th December, 1861, he was taken with twenty-four of his companions, and condemned to be shot. Conducted to the place of execution, he embraced all his Spanish followers, requested the Bersaglieri to aim carefully at their heads so as to save them pain, and then knelt down with nine of his men, chaunting a Spanish litany. The first discharge laid him dead. On the 27th December, the Prince de Scilla and the Vicomte de St. Priest obtained the permission of General La Marmora to exhume the body of Don Borjés and transport it for burial to Rome."

It is certainly curious to meet these dainty amateurs seeking "emotions" and pretty girls, in company with such cannibal ruffians as those above described, or such a man as Francesco

Piazza, nick-named Cuccitto—a truculent-looking brute, who assassinated his benefactor, dragging off his chin with his grey beard, and displaying it in Rome to attest the murder to his friends. This tiger, after many similar atrocities, was seized near Terracina with his band, consisting of nearly thirty individuals, all allied to one another by family ties—a family of wild beasts (as Count St. Jarlioz calls them) who had terrified the whole country by their thirst of blood, their horrible cruelty, and their monstrous depravity.

Perhaps the most curious of the whole tribe of bandits, however, was a woman named Maria Olivieri, of Calabria. When this gentle dame was arrested, in the spring of the present year, it appeared that there were *forty* capital cases against her, including the murder of her own sister. A Neapolitan officer, who had just come from the district she had haunted, informed me that her age certainly did not exceed twenty-three, and that she was a fine-looking young woman.

The means by which this whole dreadful system of brigandage may be put down are not neglected by the Italian Government. The case, however, is beset with difficulties. The obvious plan of

punishing those who afford shelter and aid to the Brigands, the *Manutengoli* as they are called, can scarcely be put in practice without much hardship and even injustice. The law affixing penalties to this offence, commonly called the *Pica* law, has already been the source of much complaint. Wretched peasants, with the pistols of a ferocious bandit levelled at their heads, can hardly be expected to refuse the succour so demanded, and to punish them for *being robbed* in this way, is neither just nor expedient, seeing that it cannot fail to enlist their popular sympathies still more against the government. Better plans than this Pican law, however, are in action, and will, doubtless, produce better results.

The *guardia nazionale* of the disturbed provinces has been treated with implicit trust, and given upwards of 100,000 muskets, and, besides these, large bodies of regular troops have been sent into the country. General La Marmora, under whose command they are placed, has covered the worst districts with a net-work of detachments, and thus prevents the formation of bands of any great strength; albeit lesser parties still exist, and set the brilliant hussars, with red caps

and rattling arms, altogether at defiance to surprise them in their well-watched dens among the defiles of the Appenines. Of course, however, the military conquest of the existing bands of brigands is but the correction of the visible symptom of a disease which lies deep in the constitution of the patient, and must be eradicated there, if it is not to burst out again the first moment the application of such force is removed. The *cure* of Brigandage is yet distant, and can be effected only by the slow processes by which the ignorant and starving *caffoni* can be raised into an educated and prosperous peasantry. The schools which Ferdinand II expressly *forbade* to be opened in the villages, inhabited by labourers only, and which Victor Emanuel has opened to the number of 1,755, throughout the province, afford the best hope of improvement of all. Railways, good roads (quite as much needed in Naples as railways), the draining of marshes, clearing of forests, division of lands, and stern repression of the feudal tyrannies and local enmities, which still subsist in these remote regions, all these causes together will doubtless, ere long, touch the root of the evil. For the satisfaction,

however, of any one to whom, after the above true details, the name of Brigand may still possess a romantic charm, it may be affirmed only too certainly that many years must yet elapse ere the genus Carusso be finally extinct and buried underground with other "dragons of the prime"

"Which tare each other in their slime"—

and leave the earth fit for the habitation of a nobler and a happier race.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE NEMESIS OF WOMAN.

IN the old books for children about Africa there used to be always a chapter devoted to a highly diverting subject, called Mumbo Jumbo. Generally, there was also what was called, a "cut" illustrative of the chapter, in which work of art the infant eye dimly discerned, through innumerable smudges and false lines, a sort of barbaric scarecrow, supported by the solid shanks of a tall negro, and evidently in pursuit of some women and children, who were flying in as much trepidation as the somewhat limited powers of the "cut" maker permitted him to express. How we all laughed (at the mature age of ten) at those stupid negresses who could be taken in by the scarecrow! What fun we thought it would be to act Mumbo Jumbo ourselves, especially if we might be permitted to make all the hideous

noises we read he was accustomed to produce! It was all very amusing—indeed, if our memory fails not, the only amusing thing in those rather dreary "Manners and Customs" books, in which all children were officially supposed (I know not wherefore) to be interested. In later years, we read Missionary works,—in which we were also considered to be somehow deeply concerned;—and with much pleasure we remember again meeting our old friend Mumbo Jumbo in the authentic narrative of some preacher in Southern Africa. It seems the worthy divine, having succeeded in gathering a distinguished audience of chiefs and their adherents, employed some hours in giving them what he felt to be a powerful and impressive summary of Calvinistic theology. The attention and respect with which his imperfectly draped congregation listened to his discourse were all that could be desired; and when the king formally thanked him for his labours, the missionary's hopes of a large haul of converts for his celestial net were naturally much excited. They were somewhat damped, however, when the sable Majesty of Hottentot-Land proceeded to say: "We are very much obliged to

you for all your pretty stories, and in return we shall be happy to tell you some others, for we also have plenty of stories as well as the white man. There was once a MUMBO JUMBO who haunted a village," etc., etc.! It does not appear, however, that the missionary took notes of the king's "story"—at least they were not preserved in the work from which we derived our information.

Now the idea of a Mumbo Jumbo seems essentially a great one. It is an invention whereby the female portion of humanity is kept in awe and order by the lordlier sex—not by brute force and cruelty (although Mumbo Jumbo does occasionally thrash too audacious squaws), but by working on those fears of the supernatural which, it appears, are common to negresses as well as Caucasian dames. Mumbo Jumbo judiciously exhibited, not ostentatiously paraded every evening, but just brought out when needed, is affirmed to keep a kraal in the most perfect order, and to render masculine authority and conjugal rights absolutely supreme. There is no female infidel in Caffraria or the adjacent regions. Articles on "Women and Scepticism" do not appear in

Hottentot Magazines. Bosjeswomen show all the beautiful simplicity of belief so often sighed for elsewhere. Even the King of Dahomey's Amazons do not seem to add the crime of disbelieving in Mumbo Jumbo to the other more venial errors of their "strong-minded" characters. The plan appears to work with admirable regularity. All the men, of course, know that Mumbo Jumbo is a joke, but all the women believe him to be an awful demon, ready to punish every feminine delinquency; or, if they don't quite believe in him, at least pretend to do so, to avoid too forcible demonstrations of his diabolical strength. Order reigns in female Negroland, and Mumbo Jumbo is its beneficent guardian.

Perhaps it might be possible, without going so far as Africa, to find some slight analogy to the great masculine idea of the Mumbo elsewhere. In other countries than Guinea, or Caffraria, or wherever may be the *locale* of that blessed spirit (our tender years when we read of him must excuse the inaccuracy of our geography) in other continents besides that of the race of Ham, there are notions afloat which bear no small resemblance to that hobgoblin. Perhaps, even in England itself,

there may be found a few husbands and fathers who choose that their wives and daughters should believe in certain ghostly enemies in whom they themselves have not the smallest credence; and are also of opinion that only by such wholesome fears as this belief may suggest can the female character be properly preserved.

In sober truth, it would seem that all the world over there has been a constant tendency among mankind to suppose that Lies are great moral agents. It is not only for the weaker sex that they have been thought efficacious, but generally for all the simpler, younger, or poorer classes of society. From the very earliest times, wise men in Greece and Egypt thought that it was good for *them* to learn at Eleusis and On that

> "There is but one God alone,
> The greatest of gods and of mortals";

but that for the οἱ πολλοί, it was good to believe in Pan, and Vulcan, and Venus, or in Apis and Typhon, and cats and crocodiles, at discretion. Vainly did Moses and the great Founder of Christianity labour to make the secret of the priesthood the common faith of the nation, and to give to "the poor" the doctrines of "the kingdom

of Heaven." The same distinction of esoteric and exoteric lessons stole into the early Church, and through the Middle Ages pervaded not only theology but physical science, till it was thought as much the duty of the learned to keep their discoveries from the vulgar by hiding them in enigmas, as we deem it to make them universally known. Science has escaped from this snare; but theology, even in the freer churches of Protestantism, is far from having done so. Only a year ago, one of our teachers was rebuked (by the son of Dr. Arnold!) for attempting to speak openly to the masses on questions of criticism, and not confining to "edification" all addresses to their benighted minds. Every day we hear the plea, "Do not let our young men, our working classes, our women, begin to question the popular belief. Let *them* keep back, whoever goes forward. This people who know not the law will be cursed if they come to hear new truths. "Bread" do they want? We must give it them with a very little wheat and a vast deal of chaff, or it will utterly poison them." So the cry runs, and whatever "Gospel" some among us have got—a Gospel of a Kingdom of Heaven which has no antitype

Kingdom of Hell—it is clear that it is not a Gospel for the "*Poor*," or for "*Babes*," but only for the wise and mighty we mean it to be.

The universal idea seems to be that Error is quite an innocent thing, and only Truth a dangerous one. A little Error more or less—or even a great deal of error,—is of no spiritual hurt. It is only very perilous to have too much Truth. We may leave people in their mistakes and blunders and false and frightful ideas of God and His Providence, without any sin or "responsibility". The wicked thing to do is to take away these errors from ignorant people and incur the "responsibility" of teaching them that upon which we rest our own souls as Truth. Nay, the thing does not stop here. If it be a *duty* to leave people in error, it can hardly be any offence to help to propagate such error, to teach it to our children, and pay others to teach it to the poor. In the interests of religion and morality we uphold an organised system of *quasi* delusion. Of course, in Protestant countries, this has its limits; but in Catholic ones there are no limits, except those of expediency. Once admit the idea that it is good to lie for religion's

sake, and the lie may grow to any dimensions. A little lie may serve a man, but it is hard to calculate how big an one may be wanted to serve God.

What is the cause of this wide-spread delusion that the base metal is good for the currency of the spiritual realm, and only the gold needs to be nailed to the counter? There can be but one cause,—an equally wide-spread disbelief in Truth *as* Truth, in God as the God of Truth, in Morality as resting on Truth, on Human Nature as responding to Truth. Nothing but disbelief,—a latent but most profound disbelief, in these things could produce such results. If Truth be a dream, if God be a vision, if Morality be a politic invention, if Human Nature have as great affinity with miserable delusions as with the noblest and holiest realities, *then* indeed men would act logically in leaving Error full scope, and only placing padlocks on the lips of Truth. But to hold the contrary, and yet be for ever distrustful of every truth which floats on the wind or shines down on us from the sky—this is illogical; unutterably monstrous and absurd.

There is a Scepticism which lies much deeper

than any doubt we ever hear formulated in words. The Atheist is often free from this worst and lowest Scepticism, and many a professedly orthodox Christian, who can sign his thirty-nine articles with a clear conscience, is eaten up with it. This is the Scepticism which doubts that good leads to good; that heroic deeds had heroic motives; that saintly lives sprung from holy aspirations; that love, divine or human, is unselfish. This is the Scepticism whose arguments are all *inductions* from its narrow observations of human weakness, and never *deductions* from loftier grounds of confidence and trust. It has no great major terms of unassailable faith to which all minor experimental facts must be subordinated in its syllogisms. It has a huge Policy, but no Morality — a Body of Theology and not a spark of Religion. This, and this alone, is the true and fatal Scepticism of our time, and of all time, albeit no books are written to refute it, no pulpit resounds with its condemnation.

The man who is a Sceptic in this sense will very naturally believe that new Truth is a far more dangerous and explosive thing than old Error, and that it is far better for the masses of

mankind to go on believing in anything they may have believed hitherto, and which has not utterly choked their souls, rather than run the risk of changing their moral diet. "What good after all would more Truth do them? The mischief which the old error works may be greater or less; probably it is the fault of the people themselves, their race, or their climate; or their government perhaps,—if a ridiculous theology be found in suspicious juxtaposition with grovelling fanaticism, stupid bigotry and universal corruption. Creeds have very little, if anything to do, with men's conduct. Of course, if it be some utterly abominable sort of heathenism inculcating Thuggee or the like, we ought to put it down; but otherwise, it is safest to leave it alone!"

Of course, there is a good side as well as this monstrous one to the too common reticence of Truth and profligacy of Error. There is a real and great danger in all important transitions of opinion. We go through minor ones every day of our lives, and correct some old mistake or add some new fact to our experience. But these affect us by degrees and it is only after lapses

of time and when the change has gone on so slowly as to have been free from danger, that we perceive we have drifted away from the banks between which we floated and have reached a wider and deeper part of the river. The danger is when we are suddenly pushed off our moorings and carried down the rapids before we know how to trim our little boats and seize the helm of self-control. No one who has passed through the crisis of a change of opinion on any vital matter, or who has any reverence for the struggles of the human soul, can deal with such things coarsely and hastily, or think it a light matter to bid his brother arise from any shrine, however poor may be its idol, till he feel he can surely guide him to the marble steps of God's own altar. Tenderness and reverence in removing Error, and earnestness and diffidence in teaching what to us is Truth—are the lessons taught us alike by reason and experience. But these are the dictates of sound feeling concerning the *way* our work is to be done. They never, rightfully, should check the work itself. Nothing but the Scepticism of which we have spoken, which doubts

that Truth is good and Error bad for all the highest purposes of life,—can make it logically defensible for a man deliberately to starve Truth and feed Error, or to remain indifferent as to their nourishment.

It must be confessed, however, that the courage of true faith is, in these matters, not always an easy thing to retain. Many allowances must be made for those in whom it falls short. In the first place, of course, there is the great fundamental difficulty, which so many experience, of assuring themselves that what they believe to be true, and what, in the last resort, they are compelled to rest on for their own soul's repose, is actually true in itself—objectively as well as subjectively. They feel, too, that in the infinite diversities of human intellects, the formulæ which convey one set of ideas to one man, seem to convey quite different notions to another, and they dread lest a literal truth may fail to teach the spiritual verity which a fiction has borne to their brother's soul; or that a moral lesson may be lost with the scientific blunder in which it has been enwrapped.

And again, in looking round on the human

race and beholding it subsisting now, and having subsisted for milleniums since the dawn of history, with so vast a share of worthless husks and chaff, if not of dust and poison, mingled in its bread of life, the question forces itself on the mind, "What if this be the inevitable form of spiritual nutriment for the large masses of men, who may be able no more to bear purely concentrated and extracted truth than the cattle could prosper on the essential chemical elements into which their food might be resolved? What if the pure gold be unfit for the currency of human life, and an admixture of base alloy be needful ere it pass through rough and common hands?" He who resists all these doubts, and holds on steadily to the principle that *all* Truth must be good, *all* Error Evil, and that in as far as he honestly believe anything to be true, in so far must he believe the knowledge of it will be a benefit to his brother;—he, we say, who can hold by this principle,—he alone has real *Faith*. All else is scepticism in disguise.

The ancient and almost universal Monopoly of Truth among the higher intellects, of which we have now traced the causes,—has always weighed

in a peculiar manner upon women. In all ages and countries, if any class has been more carefully than another excluded from the Mysteries and Illuminations of the period, and left to grovel in the lowest superstitions which priestcraft could devise,—that class has always included the female sex. To this day there is not a country in the world wherein whatever religious darkness may exist is not gathered thickest in women's minds. In heathen countries, Catholic countries, Protestant countries, the same thing takes place. Men emancipate themselves more or less, but women scarcely ever. In whatever temple, from Benares to Santiago, the most exaggerated and monstrous worship takes place, *there* are the throngs of female devotees. And, in like manner, in whatever church or lecture-room the purest and most enlightened doctrines are to be heard—*there* the usual proportion of the sexes is reversed,—and men abound while women hardly appear.— If we ask anywhere "Who are they who cry up some fanatical preacher, who buy some absurd book, who form a party for some ambitious priest, who allow themselves to be fooled and made tools of for

the support of the most outrageous sect or religious society?"—there is always the same answer —"The women."

Of course there is a natural explanation of the cause of this phenomenon, which reflects no blame on any one. In the great distribution of qualities between the two sexes there is little doubt that, on the whole, men have more Justice and women more Piety—men more Understanding and women keener Intuitions. Women's piety and quick receptiveness make them as ready to fall into exaggerated forms of religion (*under the conditions of their imperfect education and limited knowledge of the world*) as the sense of justice and strong understanding of men preserve them from such errors. If wild ideas are afloat they will assuredly lodge first and take root deepest, in the brain which is least cautious and logical by nature, and least well furnished by education. If ecclesiastics find anywhere slaves and dupes, they will certainly do so among the most yielding and enthusiastic hearts. Human nature being what it is, it must remain to a certain point inevitable, that women should be more superstitious than men.

But what *ought* to be the course of action consequently adopted by men towards women? Ought they not to labour—as fathers, husbands, brothers, to correct this deplorable propensity? Ought they not to afford those who depend on them for mental almost as much as for bodily support such strong meat as may help to render them healthy and sound, and competent to contend against the inherent weakness of their constitutions? The true religious education of a young woman, while gently correcting tendencies to a hasty judgment and over-ready credulity, would afford her such a basis of solid instruction, such habits of cautious examination and logical reasoning, as should arm her against the dangers to which she is peculiarly liable. A sense of the infinite sanctity of Truth should be inculcated, sufficient for ever to forbid her hurried acceptance or prejudiced rejection of any opinion from that eternal source of woman's credence,—personal sympathy or antipathy. Every effort should be made to relieve her from the sordid fears of superstition, whereby her mind can be over-balanced by whomsoever may hereafter play upon them. That conviction which is the free-

dom of the soul, should be recognised as beyond appeal, that all God asks of us is the honest and earnest DESIRE to *Believe what is True and to Do what is Right*, and that when our hearts condemn us not for any failure or faltering in this high aim, then ought we "to have confidence towards God", let all the teachers in the world threaten us with His wrath.

*This* education given to women, and the habit of free converse on religious matters with the sound minds of men versed in the ideas and criticism of the age,—would assuredly be the fitting protections for them against fanaticism, the proper preparations for them of a life of steady and rational piety. We may add yet more. Such education would fit them to use the special intuitive consciousness of holy things wherewith God has endowed them, in performing their share in the religious progress of the race; and even as a mother's gentle lessons sink deepest into a child's heart, so might the tender sympathies of wife and sister draw many a husband and brother by "the cords of a man and the bonds of love" to a piety he now rejects, because it comes to him in the guise of intellectual weakness and ignorance.

This is what *might* be the religious education of women. This is what enlightened affection for them ought to teach their fathers to give them, even when the error of their mother's own training makes them incapable of thus strengthening them. But what is the fact? What is the actual education of young women all over Europe—in England as well as elsewhere? What is the training chosen by fathers for their daughters, and afterwards prolonged through life by the influence of nearly every other man —husband, brother, friend, or acquaintance with whom they come in contact? Surely, it is hardly too much to say that it is the reverse of all this. In Catholic countries, even priest-hating fathers, who bring up their boys to laugh at Romish superstitions, almost invariably send their daughters to convents to be crammed with them from six years old to sixteen. In Protestant England or Germany they are not sent to convents but schools, or are instructed by governesses at home. And what is looked for in these schools and governesses? Breadth of thought, largeness of culture, general mental soundness and power? I confess I

hardly ever yet heard of a father who dreamed of looking for such qualities in the instructress of his daughter. On the contrary, multiplicity and brilliancy of superficial acquirements are the qualities in demand; and, for religious opinions, the strictest form of orthodoxy of whatever the parents' church may be. A governess, or schoolmistress, who should admit herself to have latitudinarian ideas, or even to have an acquaintance with works of German, French, and English free criticism, would hardly succeed in obtaining pupils in one family in a thousand. A young English lady of twenty or twenty-five years of age has gone usually through a course which would be absolutely suited to its object were it the deliberate purpose of her parents to make her as narrow-minded and bigoted as possible. She has had her memory and imagination cultivated, but hardly ever her reasoning powers; she knows a good deal of history, geography, music, and drawing, but nothing of logic, geometry, or the various philosophical and religious systems of the world; she has attended the places of worship of her own sect, never those of any other; she has read works to instil one set

of opinions, and never opened those which dispute them; she has seen dozens of people who either believe as she has been taught to do, or in her presence sedulously restrain a word or smile which should betray a doubt of them; she has perhaps never once in her life experienced the curiously expansive results of *looking* at a good and honest human countenance, and reflecting that the owner was one of those she has been taught to consider outside the pale of Divine favour. All this her parents have managed for her in her school-room; but her little world, when she enters it at last, is pretty sure to do still more, and enforce the lesson by every kind of obloquy against divergence from the beaten track, and sentimental admiration for an excess of credulity. I would appeal to every woman whether in her youth this influence did not reach her from almost every man with whom she came in contact—no encouragement to read or think, no useful guidance to the mode of supplying, by self-culture, the terrible blanks left in her mental education, but always the same soothing voice, "Keep just where you are, it is safe—it is graceful for a woman to believe; the more she

can believe the more charming she is. Why should you vex your brains, which are meant for softer themes, with such hard problems as those of theology? You will gain nothing by so doing, but peril to your soul. Remain orthodox, and you are safe, and women will love, and men approve, you. To diverge from it is to be dreaded by your own sex, and disliked by the other."

Where does all this come from? *Why* do men wish their daughters, sisters, wives, to believe more than they do themselves? What pleasure can it be to them to keep them outside of their deepest interests, incapable of sharing with them their greatest thoughts? There are several reasons for it all. Some of these are vain and sentimental. Feminine debility and dependence of mind, is the correlative of that physical weakness and cowardice which some men seem to need, to throw into relief a sense of their own strength and courage. A learned woman, a logical woman, a large-thoughted woman, distresses them by failing in her vocation in this way, and not allowing their Eton Grammar and Aldridge, and manly audacity of scepticism about Balaam or the Flood, to stand out

in proper splendour of contrast. It is as bad that she should be "strong-minded" as "able-bodied" and strong-nerved,—and for the same reason. This is the poorest form of masculine dislike to female freedom of thought.

Then there is a sentimental objection, felt by better minds than the last. They see how good and pure are often the lives and hearts of those whose intellects are shackled by a thousand idle fetters; they look on a young woman as on a beautiful child, and wish it might never grow older lest it lose some infantine grace or simple charm. Perhaps the remembrance of struggles not passed through without severe wounds which have left scars on the conscience, may make such a man shrink from the thought of a woman passing through the like—unknowing that she will often do so in her innocence better and more safely than he has done. This is the feeling which seems to pervade many of the best class of men—a feeling which we may trace even in the wide philosophy of *In Memoriam*—

> "Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,
> Her early Heaven, her happy views;
> Nor with thy shadowed hint confuse
> A life which leads melodious days."

After all—the poet thinks—her mistakes are wholly innocuous. She finds spiritual truth even in formal error—

> "Her faith, through form, is pure as thine,
> Her hands are swifter unto good;
> Oh! sacred be the flesh and blood,
> To which she links a life divine!"

And all which the stronger soul has to do, is, *not* to clear away the errors which beset the path of such goodness, but to take home to itself the beautiful lesson it is made to teach:

> "See, thou that countest reason ripe,
> In holding by the law within,
> Thou fail not, in a world of sin
> And e'en, for want of such a type."

But, yet again, there is another and much lower cause for the desire of some men to keep women in religious bonds from which they have themselves long ago escaped. That deepest Scepticism of which we have spoken before—the scepticism of the power of moral obligations unsupported by threats and bribes, takes no form more decided than the disbelief in the virtue of woman, even of the very woman the sceptic yet professes to love. Distrustful of her honour and her affection, he curiously reposes confidence in her *fears*; in those very terrors of religion which

are the first things *he* has discarded as imaginary. He cannot rest on her moral conscience, nor on her loyalty to the true Lord of Conscience, but only on her belief in certain *false* doctrines, her submission to priestly authority, her dread of the physical torments threatened by priests. Thus his own want of conscientiousness and real religion, by making him incapable of trusting their power over another, throw him on resources, which, to his own recognition, are mere delusions. He trusts his wife's virtue to no motive he thinks a true one, but solely to one he is convinced is false. If she should perceive, then, some day that it is a false motive, he thinks she must be lost since she was supported by it alone, and by nothing more real. What marvel is it, that proceeding on such grounds, such a man should take the best care in the world that his wife, to the end of her days, should never discover that the basis of her virtue is all a mistake?

We need not dwell on the ugly features of this matter, the lack it betrays of all that should ennoble the relations of men and women. Fortunately, we may be assured that in England, at all events, things very seldom reach the point we

have described, and that even very base men feel that English women, on the whole, have other motives for keeping in a course of honour than any which the *fictions* of theology can supply, and that real love and loyalty to God and goodness, are paramount to fear. Still, the notion that such threats have *some* use, and that it would be by no means wise to forego such advantage as they may offer, is beyond doubt a prevalent one, and takes a not inconsiderable place among the many motives of sentiment which combine to make men rather labour to obscure than to enlighten the religion of women.

But, whatever limits we may put to the prevalence of such ideas in England, it is obvious enough they have had great sway in southern lands, and under priesthoods more greedy of power than our own. In Belgium, France, Southern Germany, and Italy, women, from the Dark Ages, downward, have been left to grope among whatever superstitions their confessors and directors chose to teach them, without an effort, so far as we know, on the part of men to withdraw them from such influences. Of course, there have been no deliberate designs to bring them

up, generation after generation, in stupid credulity. Neither a sex nor a class is ever consciously and deliberately unjust to another. Fathers, who sent their daughters for education to the most bigoted convents, and husbands who held out no helping hand to them afterwards to escape from the slough, were as little alive to the wrong they were doing as the old Roman philosophers, who never raised a finger to put down domestic slavery or elevate their slaves. Fathers and philosophers alike, took it as a matter of course, that women and bondsmen should continue mentally and physically enslaved. It was in the order of things that it should be so; and this order had a side gratifying to the sentiments, and reassuring to the fears of those who maintained it.

The result of this course, persisted in for ages, has come in our day into clear relief. In all Protestant countries, in a moderate degree—in all Catholic countries, in an exorbitant degree—women are at this moment the upholders of whatever is most opposed to the progress and enlightenment of humanity. Everywhere superstition, uprooted from men's minds, clings tightly

round the souls of women, and spreads its poisonous influence from that sure ground. Everywhere the most designing and ambitious of the clergy find in women their best tools for promoting their schemes of political or spiritual despotism.

Above all, in ITALY, is this dire misfortune most fully experienced. Here, where least confidence has been either placed in them, or perhaps deserved by them—here, where they have most completely given over to ecclesiastical rule—here, in the land where nuns are "Murate" and "Sepolte vive," and daughters, wives, and mothers, left to adore winking Madonnas, and follow the direction of one of those priests whose gross and degraded faces strike the beholder with disgust —in *this* land the NEMESIS of WOMAN has come indeed.

After ages of disunion and misgovernment, worse than those of any other country in Europe, the Italian nation has arisen in our day and taken for itself in the world's sight the glorious position of a free and united people. Probably, never before has a political revolution, similarly engaged the hearts of the whole mass of a nation, and been equally the ardent desire of noble and

peasant, citizen and mountaineer. It must be seen to be understood, how the achievements already made stir the pride, and the further achievements yet expected rouse the hopes, of every man from highest to lowest with whom the traveller comes in contact. The sacrifices of the long-cherished local glories of the several provinces, sacrifices freely and joyfully accomplished for the attainment of an United Italy — the hitherto unexperienced taxes borne by the whole population—and the still more trying conscription for the enormous army, all endured in the hope of forming at last a free and powerful nation—these solid proofs would suffice, did we not meet in every rank and class throughout the country, an interest in the subject quite amazing to witness. A few years ago, no one talked politics in Italy. Now, no one talks of anything else. It is not too much to say that the hope of completing the Kingdom, by the annexation of Rome and Venice, is at this hour nearer to the heart of nine Italians out of ten than any political object whatever is to one Englishman in a thousand, and that few fears of a personal sort would weigh with them against the

horror of a return to the ancient régime, darkened by all the accumulated vengeance of the restored priests and despots.

Yet these hopes still hang in the balance, these fears are still full of menace. Italy has triumphantly passed through the first act of her drama of Restoration; but there are many more yet to be performed ere the most sanguine can conceive the play to be acted out. Venice must be wrenched from Austria, Rome from the Pope; and both without the nation rushing to certain destruction upon French bayonets, or permitting itself to be dismembered in the confusion of even a temporary defeat. Naples must be civilised, and redeemed from brigandage; and all the seven provinces of the new kingdom fused into an union much more real than any which now exists. The Army must be completed, and the Navy created. A new Civil and Criminal Code must be composed and established. The use of free political and judicial institutions must be taught to whole provinces, hitherto acquainted only with the methods of oppression and corruption. The perilous deficit in the revenue of three hundred millions per annum, must somehow be

stopped short of national bankruptcy. Last, not least, the solemn problem of the future religion of the country must be solved, and some *mezzo termine* arrived at between the abandonment of all public recognition of the religious element in humanity, and the subservience of the Civil power to the tyranny of Rome. All these labours of Hercules yet lie before the young nation, ere it may for a moment repose under the belief that its freedom is secured, and that evils and disgrace, worse than all those of the past, may not yet end all its high hopes and proud promises.

In this life and death struggle of a nation, it is not then a light thing, that well nigh half the population of the country should be, if not disloyal, yet at least open to influences from the enemy. Of all the foes of Italy, none are to be compared for danger to the reactionary priests; in fact, with them and their machinations must sink or swim the cause of despotism or freedom, of disunion or unity. But these priests—bitter foes that they are of the New Kingdom, unscrupulous and cruel as all the world has recognised them for ages—these priests have got, in almost every household in the land, a spy and an accom-

plice; Jesuits, Capuchins, secular priests, and nuns,—they have between them the women of the upper ranks and of the lower, the matrons who seek them in confession, and the young girls who are placed in their convents for education. A few women, indeed, set them at nought utterly; a few more adhere to the party of Passaglia, and choose their directors among the Liberal Clergy; a great many more, we must believe, give their heart's sympathies to the cause of their husbands and sons, albeit their tyrants force them to act as their betrayers. But, as a rule, the women of Italy are mere tools in the hands of the *Neri*. They have little or no comprehension of, or sympathy for, the great changes through which their country is passing: and the one thing they do see, and regard with consternation, is, that a rebellion is going on against those in whose hands alone they have been taught to believe lie the keys of heaven and hell.

The English reader may suppose that much of this description of the state of things must needs be exaggerated; that it is impossible things can be so bad as this. Books of politics and newspaper reports say nothing of them; and English

travellers,—intent on the Parliament or the Army, Mazzinians or Liberals,—have little chance of getting into the interior of Italian homes, where such evil is at work. Yet, he that has seen any way beneath the surface of domestic life, from Piedmont to Naples, can testify that *no* description can well be exaggerated of the fatal influence at this moment of the priesthood over the women of Italy. Once open on the theme in any company of Italian men, there is an outburst of complaints —a torrent of anecdotes. Here is an officer, who tells how his friend and comrade, a man of rank and high promise, fought gallantly at Magenta and Solferino, and seemed made to reach the best posts in the army; but his wife, hearkening to the incessant lesson of her confessor that her husband was lost for ever if he remained under the Italian standard, exercised over him such influence, that at last, to pacify her, he threw up his commission. Here is a gentleman to whom a lady confided her regrets that she had been *driven* to induce her husband by prayers and tears to vote against his and her political faith. Her Confessor had refused her absolution till she succeeded, and though she

cared much for her country and honestly believed the vote injurious, she dared not hazard her soul. Here again, are anecdotes of daughters who would not marry till their lovers should give up their employments under Government, and mothers who made their sons betray to them every information which the priests desired to obtain. When it is remembered that all this goes on,—not in England where certain lines of official honesty are clearly drawn—but in Italy where there are hardly such lines left at all by the utter corruptions of the past—not in England where there is little social caballing, but in Italy where all social life is a complicated intrigue—then some faint notion may be gained of the state of affairs, of the dangers involved in the fact that nine-tenths of the women of Italy are the tools of the priests. Truly, the Italian gentleman is to be pitied whose heart is full of patriotic aspirations, who devotes his life to the redemption of his country, and who returns to his home from the camp or the senate to know that every word he says will probably be carried by his wife to her Confessor, and that his mother's counsels have probably been dictated to her by the bitterest enemy

of his cause. That thousands are now enduring a parallel misery in that country where females have been for ages left to suffer all the degradation of superstition, is a terrible instance of natural justice. If Italy, in her death-struggle, should faint and fail (which God forbid!), among the causes which will have laid her at the feet of her enemies will be their influence over her women.

Among the efforts which the new Government are making for the benefit of the country, few are wiser, it would seem, than the aid given to education of females. Hitherto, however little was done for boys, still less by far was done for girls; but the present Government has pretty well placed the schools for the different sexes on a level both as to numbers of schools and the education given them. At present about half the female teachers in the Elementary Schools are necessarily Nuns—a sufficient supply of lay-schoolmistresses for the enormous number of new schools, being unattainable. The nuns, however, who act as teachers are wholly under secular supervision, and a regular supply of lay-teachers is being prepared as rapidly as possible

in the *Scuole Normale* all over the country. I have carefully examined the *curriculum* of instruction for these young teachers, and can only say if they get through the half of it, we may have no fear afterwards of London University Examinations for Ladies! By the time these teachers are taught and have then taught their pupils, and these pupils have gone forth to be the wives and mothers of future Italy, priestly dominion will have been far undermined. It is *now*, alas! in the hour of struggle that the need is felt for such a change, and that Nemesis cannot be put off with any promises for the next generation.

The New Code now preparing for presentation to Parliament, will, it is said, include several Articles, altering very essentially the position of Italian women. It will make Marriage a Civil Contract, leaving the special terms of it, it appears, very much to the option of the parties. It will also give women holding property, *Municipal* though not political rights, and enable them to vote for the election of city officers, mayors, etc. It would be premature to pass any opinion on these projected laws which are yet merely sketched in the incomplete Code. Their

appearance there, however, seems to afford sufficient testimony that the legislators of United Italy have no intention of perpetuating the old order of things as regards women—any more than as regards other matters. It is to be hoped, in any case, that before a law becomes effective which grants to women any political or municipal rights whatever, the generation which has benefited by the improved education, may at all events, have partially appeared on the stage. Ladies trained in convents in their youth, and ever since occupied only in those trivial amusements favoured by the priests and the old *régime*, must assuredly be much more fit for judging of an opera or selecting a becoming bonnet, than for giving votes on matters of politics. It would be rather a cruel chance if to *such* women were confided the first trial of any legislation affording new privileges to the sex.*

* While these sheets are passing through the press, an eminent divine of the Church of England has denounced the judgment of the Privy Council in the case of Drs. Williams and Wilson, and appealed in the *Times* for consideration for the poor *mothers* who dread lest their sons be taught that future punishment is not eternal. Women are first drilled by the clergy into certain beliefs, and then their bigoted adherence to them is made a reason for teaching those beliefs to their sons for ever.

## CHAPTER XII.

### CATHOLIC ITALY.

THE subject of the present condition of religion in Italy is one of great interest, yet not to be approached without considerable pain. In nearly all the past great revolutions of Christendom, and notably in those of England, strong religious feelings were at work, and brought an element of deep solemnity into the struggle. In Italy, however, according to the unanimous testimony of every witness, the interest in religious things has reached the very lowest ebb yet marked in the chart of Europe's history. The subject of Religion itself, in truth, has become generally distasteful to the minds of Italian men — if not of Italian women. A sort of Chinese indifferentism pervades the nation. "We have enough to do," they seem to feel, "with the affairs of this world — with politics, and railways,

and the opera. Why trouble our heads about Heaven, and Hell, and Purgatory? They are places which belong to the priests, if they have any existence at all, which is a question we cannot spare time to consider." The bitterest enemies of the Papacy do but condemn it on secular grounds, the political tyranny it inflicts on its subjects, and the corruption of its jurisprudence; and, above all, its opposition to the wishes of the Italian nation to make Rome their capital. It is not because the Pope and his priests, by their degrading theology, darken men's souls, and cloud to their eyes the light of the Divine Goodness, that their Church is hated. It is because, by their political action, they thwart the progress of the country. If the Italians curse Pio IX, it is not for shutting against them the gates of the Heavenly Kingdom, but those of the City of Rome. In *this* respect, indeed, the Papal government is detested enough to satisfy Exeter Hall itself. The word "Prete" (priest) is invariably pronounced by every Italian through his teeth, and with a peculiar sneer, and every portion of the Romish system—even the most solemn services of the Church—are the favourite topics of private ridicule, and the carica-

tures of the public humorous papers. When we consider how shocked we should be in England to see "Punch" put forth sketches of incidents happening in a church, and that even a caricature of Convocation would hardly be thought in good taste, some idea may be formed of the sentiments of Tuscans, Neapolitans, and Piedmontese, who crowd round the shop windows to applaud pictures turning into jest all the ministers and services of their religion—the Pope receiving a slap in the back (*una solenne scullacciata*) from Garibaldi—his general leading a corps of chorister boys with incense pots and crucifixes, shouting "Pax vobiscum"—winking Madonnas with priests pulling the strings—or the image of Christ himself on the altar, kicking off the Pope's tiara, exclaiming: "My kingdom is not of this world." All these straws, flung out every week to the wind of popular feeling over Italy, prove beyond a doubt the current in which it sets at this moment.

The mournful truth is manifest, that the pressure of Romanism in Italy has effected a mischief deeper than any hitherto worked by false creeds in Europe. It has poisoned, or rather arrested,

the flow of the religious sentiment of the nation almost at the spring head. It is not marvellous that it should have done so. Superstition, like slavery, is an evil whose magnitude we underestimate altogether, if we imagine that human souls can be subjected to its degradation for ages, and at a moment's call arise fitted for freedom, and able to experience the emotions of piety. *Every* false doctrine and debasing observance must leave behind it more or less distorted ideas, more or less palsied feelings, and the *vis mediatrix naturæ* (as real in the moral world as in the physical) can at least only effect a slow and imperfect restoration. But in Italy, religious error has allied itself with secular tyranny—the error being the grossest, the tyranny the most corrupt which modern times have witnessed, and the result is inevitably beyond the ordinary ill consequences of superstition. Had Popery been merely a spiritual evil in Italy, it is possible it might have left behind it here, as it did in England at the Reformation, the fervent faith of the Marian Martyrs and the Pilgrim Fathers, to prove the yet unconquered vitality of the religious element in the nation. It might have left behind it en-

thusiasts who would have warred against and destroyed it, because they loved Truth passionately enough to hate Error. The Iconoclast is the son of the Idolator by the natural order of moral generation, and a hopeful symptom of vigorous life in a nation is the appearance in its great crises of bands of such men, even if their zeal border on fanaticism. Would that one spark of such a spirit burned in Italian breasts just now! But the double evil of a spiritual tyranny, which has been also a political despotism, and which has offered itself as an engine of corruption and oppression, shows itself in this, that it leaves those on whom it has pressed without even the energy to rise up and overthrow it. When the hour of its fall arrives, it crumbles away, and crushes down from its own rottenness, and no hand is lifted to give it a blow—scarcely a foot raised to spurn it on the ground. Men do not clear away the wreck, and purify and hallow afresh the temple it profaned, but they pass by to the senate-house and the market-place, and the threshold of fallen Dagon is passed no more.

In the old fabulous history of Ireland, there is a myth of a giant who once tyrannised over all

the land, and devoured the people for his food. At last, after centuries of oppression, the giant died, and men were set free. But his huge corpse lay prone upon the earth from north to south, and none could bury it, so that at last there arose from it a pestilence more grievous even than his tyranny had been, and men prayed that the giant might come to life again. Popery is not dead yet, nay, nor nearly dead. Old Bunyan's dream of him, sitting before his cave beside Pagan, no longer able to maul the pilgrims, and falling into decrepitude, was a long forestalling of the work of years yet to come. But as the time approaches, there is but too much reason to fear that when all true life has departed from the old tyrant of so many millions of souls, there will be left behind the plague of a stifling indifference, an atrophy of the religious sentiment, which may make us well nigh regret even the days of fanatical superstition.

Of course so great a fact as this nearly universal indifferentism of a nation ought not to be attributed to a single cause. The tendencies of the age have much to do with it, as well as the local reaction from the Italian phase of Romish

superstition. Savonarola himself, born in the latter half of the nineteenth century, would have been a very different reformer from him who lighted the pile of books and jewels in the Piazza della Signoria at Florence. But the broader and deeper views which the progress of science and criticism have given to mankind, and which in England bring out so many earnest thinkers and men of profound religious faith—come in contact in Italy with minds wearied and disgusted by a long dominant superstition, and instead of calling forth profounder interest and keener thoughts, lead only to the dull and stupid cry "Anche Dio è Prete! Let us leave religion alone."

Catholic Italy has three classes of men. There is, first, the great mass of *Indifferentists*, of whom I have been speaking, and who form the large majority of the nation. These all desire to retain the name of Catholics, despising utterly that of Protestants, just as some Churchmen in England do that of "Dissenters;" but as to their love for the Catholic religion, it may be averred, that if the Pope would only give up Rome, and permit of municipal and commercial reform, he might afterwards, in all safety, intro-

duce a second new dogma and set up Baal and Ashtaroth in St. Peter's, and they would cry, "Oh, Baal, hear us" as complacently as "Ave Maria!"

Secondly, there is the far smaller body, yet from its compactness, energy, and unscrupulousness, one of formidable power, the genuine *Papists*, who intensely care for the Church and her doctrines. This is of course the reactionary party, identical with the political party nicknamed *Codini* (the Tails), and are commonly also called the *Neri* (blacks), or friends of the black-robed priests.

Thirdly, there is the party of Reforming Catholics, headed by Padre Passaglia, of whom I shall speak in a separate chapter.

The Neri form a party, as I have said, of great power, presenting a very serious danger to the existing government, although their actual numbers be not very considerable. It contains, of course, all the priesthood except Passaglia's ten thousand, and such proportion more as may be supposed to sympathise secretly with his reforms without committing themselves publicly to the cause. The party also contains the ma-

jority of the nobility of Tuscany and Naples (not of Piedmont), and the superstitious part of the population everywhere—the utterly ignorant and the women. Especially in the mountains and remote villages are the Neri to be found—just as at the fall of the old worship of Jupiter, idolatry still lingered on the heaths and in the hamlets after it was banished from the more civilised parts of the country, the idolaters being called Heathens and Pagans (villagers) in consequence.* Thus we have a party formed of elements from the opposite extremes of society; the princely old historic houses of Rome and Florence; the illiterate peasants and savage bandits of the mountains of the Appenines and the Abruzzi; and finally the high-born, bigoted ladies, educated in nunneries, and knowing nothing of the world but their own inane côteries; and the poor besotted women, who crowd round the altars of winking Madonnas, and offer tapers for lucky tickets in the lottery.

* Monsignore Renier, Bishop of Feltre and Belluno, in his Pastoral for Lent, 1864, laments grievously that the Catholic religion is now "driven from the towns and taking refuge in the villages."

It would be a great mistake to judge this party of the Neri as if there were nothing to be said in defence of their views or even of their bigotry. If anything could make us doubt that all human progress, even when it seems to carry us away from the altars of our fathers, must be truly a Progress towards God, and that every truth man acquires, whether it be positive truth or negative truth, must in the last result tend to strengthen his faith in the all-righteous Lord,—if anything, I say, could make us doubt this eternal principle, it would be the observation of the present state of religion in Italy, and the fearful rebound of men's minds in that country from Superstition to Scepticism. Even in England, all who are not profoundly imbued with faith in the ultimate victory of religious truth, and convinced of the impossibility of ever doing God's work with the aid of man's deceptions, are to be found daily shrinking from the danger of exposing to the popular gaze the errors of the Church and of the Bible, which for ages have been entangled with our religion and our morality. How much more then are such hesitations excusable in Italy, where the entire sys-

tem, religious and political, of the whole land for a thousand years has been so intertwined with Catholic doctrines, that to remove such tares it would seem as if every grain of wheat in the field must be uprooted along with them! Even a philosophic mind might be tempted to say, "Let things go on as they are—the danger is too great to be risked. Better let men continue to worship a winking doll than reverence nothing in heaven or earth. The masses, the uneducated millions, are unfit here and everywhere for an enlightened creed. 'This people who know not the law are accursed.' These—saints and virgins —be thy gods, O Italy!" Much more then may men and women who are not philosophic at all, but altogether guided by sentiment and associations, and class prejudices and interests, desire ardently to retain the rule of the Church over the Nation. Inevitably to their judgment every blow aimed at Catholicism is a blow against the sole bulwark which yet remains against universal lawlessness and atheism.

The attachment of the Catholic laity of the party I am describing to the Roman Church, is easily comprehensible; and even when it assumes the

most puerile forms, has in it somewhat not to be regarded without tenderness. It is hardly to be called religious Faith in the higher meaning of the word. Those who hold it most fanatically, probably never dare to give an hour's examination to the tottering base on which it stands, or to the arguments which must level the whole structure with the ground. Yet, if not true *Faith*, it is the twilight, the after gleam of a past faith which once shone in the zenith of human thought; and even such a twilight in Italy now bears with it a certain charm and glory.

The priests themselves hold, of course, to the cause, a very different relation from that of the laity. Of the character of these Italian ecclesiastics it is hard to speak. They are generally educated in Seminaries, where the course of instruction and physical training are such as to pervert the natural development of humanity almost as much as the artifices of Flat-head Indians or small-footed Chinese women. What *can* become of a young man, who from childhood till manhood, has had for sole exercise of his body half an hour or an hour's walk in double file with a score of other lads in long trailing

robes shuffling through the streets, and for exercise of his mind, only books specially prepared to imbue him with certain ideas, and monotonous prayers, litanies, and meditations enough to stupify every faculty. Such a man's mind is not qualified to *believe* or *disbelieve* any doctrines. It is merely *saturated* with those with which it has been so unremittingly drenched. If the hapless beings so educated, shut out from home affections and all natural pleasures in youth, and refused the names of husband or father in later life, if such beings prove narrow-minded, depraved, inhuman, what marvel is it? What has there ever been done to make them wide of thought or pure in natural affections, or merciful through having been treated mercifully? The wonder is not that Romish priests should often be bad, but that they should ever be good.

The actual characters of the ecclesiastics thus trained very naturally fall into two categories—the honest bigots, and the hypocrites. Of the relative proportions of the two, it is not for human spectators to decide. Of course, the more able the man may be, the more likely it is for him to belong to the latter class, and to use the

wretched juggling miracles and social intrigues of his Church, with the clearer consciousness of their falsehood. The whole ethics of Catholicism, however, with which the minds of all have been imbued, sanction so much for the cause of the Church (nay, who can say what they would *not* sanction for that cause?) that it would be hard to decide when the priest, who pulls the string of a miraculous Madonna; or adds another to the sixteen legs of St. Mark, scattered over Italy; or refuses absolution to a wife till she betray the secrets and thwart the purposes of her liberal husband, is really self-rebuked for the turpitude of his action. Of the personal morality of the priests more than enough has been said ere now by travellers. A good Italian once explained to me that we were wrong in confounding the vow of *celibacy* taken by all ecclesiastics with the vow of *chastity* taken only by the monastic orders, and that a secular priest, usually without blame, openly avails himself of the difference. In Rome there is more prudery, and (according to every testimony) far more depravity. It is not to be wondered at, that with this monstrous paradox before their eyes at all times of celibacy

erected into a divine virtue—Saints canonised for it, and a Virgin adored as a goddess—and, on the other hand, the priesthood (vowed to this superhuman virtue) leading lives which are the scandal and corruption of society—it is not to be wondered at, I say, if the result be what we behold, the greatest confusion in the moral sense of the nation regarding the whole subject of chastity.* I am not at all sure that among the Italian laity, elsewhere than in Rome, there is as much moral disorder as has been alleged. Certainly I have seen numberless families living together in great domestic unity and peace, in a way which some stories would lead us to suppose was almost unknown in Italy. But one thing,

* J. H. Newman has lately told us, that the Catholic Church holds that this virtue counterpoises all such vices as lying, idleness, dirt, etc.; and that a filthy false-tongued mendicant, if chaste, has a chance of heaven denied to an upright and benevolent statesman of opposite habits. It is to be asked how far the Catholic clergy of Italy would consent to be tried hereafter on such a principle. A friend has informed me that, once when lodging in Rome, she received —as it happened, alone,—the visit of an elderly Monsignore, to whom she had an introduction. After his short and formal call, her Roman servant apologised for speaking, but begged to warn her it was not proper in Rome for a lady to receive an ecclesiastic alone in her *salone*. Anybody else, of course, *si;* ma un Monsignore, nò! Etiquettes of this kind are somewhat significant.

nobody who has conversed much with Italians can doubt—viz., that their theory of domestic morality is an extraordinary jumble of inconsistencies, and wholly excludes the notion, that fidelity of sentiment is required to form a part of virtue. One of the best Italian gentlemen I ever met, endeavoured once to tell me a long and unpleasant story, illustrative, as he assured me, of the great goodness of Englishwomen, for whom he entertained a profound respect. An English lady, residing with her husband in Florence, had attracted a Tuscan gentleman. Violent declarations were made by him, and listened to complacently by the lady, who returned his attachment. Finally, after many such scenes, she asked him did he love her enough to do whatever she required? The lover swore obedience. "Then," said the lady, "leave me for ever, and never see me more." "Was not this," said my Italian friend, "a noble action? Was she not a virtuous woman? I don't know where one would meet with any body to do the same; for, remember, she really loved the Tuscan!" "More shame for her," of course I replied, and endeavoured to explain to Signor S., that to

receive passionate declarations of attachment, and return such feelings, was already an offence in a married woman, and that any good English woman would consider such declarations as insults. "You don't—you can't, mean it," said my friend; "it is impossible." He was long incredulous; but when at last I satisfied him of the truth, I shall never forget the comical solemnity of wonder with which he lifted up his hands and dropped them again, ejaculating "Cosa stupenda!"

At the head of the Catholic hierarchy, the present Pope stands clear of all imputations such as his predecessors have too commonly deserved. There is much in the character of this remarkable man which will hereafter "point a moral" of the insufficiency of good dispositions to contend with a position so untenable as that of a reforming Pope. Probably, from the moment when he fled from Rome, and gave up his hopes of fulfilling the glorious promise wherewith his reign commenced, he has been an embittered man, and his *bonhommie*, once genuine, has changed to a somewhat hypocritical *douceureux* behaviour, concealing not a little spite and duplicity. Such, at

least, is the character I have heard of him from many well able to form an opinion. He may, or may not, mean well to any individual; but his good will, or semblance of such, is not to be relied on for an instant. The following anecdote of him is very amusing, and was told me on good authority. It is of course, however, of small importance as indicative of character, otherwise than as a display of his well-known *finesse*.

A young nobleman of the Papal States, on succeeding to his family title, found that his uncle and predecessor had expended nearly the whole property in assisting the Pope at the time of his flight from Rome. The young man was left all but penniless; he accordingly naturally determined to seek Pio IX, expose his condition, and implore from his Holiness either repayment, or some such office as would recompense his loss. It proved, however, no easy matter for him to obtain the desired interview. By some *unaccountable* contingency, the Pope was never able to receive him, though he applied through many channels for the favour. Months passed on, and finally two or three years, and the young nobleman was still soliciting the permission

to lay his claim before his holy debtor. At last, the Pope undertook one of his journeys; the nobleman followed him, found him on one occasion less carefully guarded than usual, forced the *consigne* at his private door, and entering the sacred presence, threw himself at his Holiness' feet, and expounded his case. The Pope listened both patiently and amiably while the youth detailed all that his uncle had given, and how the family estates were mortgaged in consequence, and how since the uncle's death he had been seeking the Pope to obtain favourable consideration of his claims. The Pope, as I have said, listened most graciously, insomuch that the nobleman congratulated himself in the confident hope that his petition would assuredly be granted. "And how long ago is it," said the Pope, "since your excellent uncle died?" "Just four years ago, may it please your Holiness." "Then," returned the Pope, "for four years exactly, *il suo signor zio has received in heaven the reward of his magnanimous devotion to the Holy See.*—Benedicite!" This said, and extending his two fingers over the abashed and kneeling suppliant, Pio IX swept out of the room.

The different orders of monks and nuns hold of course a very different relation to the present state of things, and it would perhaps be hard to involve them all under the head of active enemies of the Italian Kingdom. The more wealthy and powerful Orders, of course, are so; the Dominicans, whose office it has always been to uphold Orthodoxy, as the Auto-da-Fés of Spain and the Inquisition of Rome have well testified, and the Jesuits, who are more Roman than Rome itself; the quintessential spirit of all the ambition, perfidy, and relentlessness of that evil Church. The poor Franciscans, however, it is said, are often in the remote villages preachers of goodwill and honesty, and if they carry with them the bad example of beggary elevated into a virtue, they make up for it in a degree by also setting a pattern of cheerfulness and pious resignation. The Dominicans and the Jesuits are like ideal Spanish Dons —dark, haughty, and inscrutable; the Capuchin is more like an Irish peasant—simple, with a spice of humour, open-hearted, wholly undignified, and with an amazing preponderance of the theologic over the moral virtues. Perhaps I may generalise from too small an experience, but

of many Franciscans with whom I have come in contact in Europe and the East, I have never known one who was not thus semi-Irish in disposition, and evidently quite as fully deceived as deceiving as to the marvellous stories he was ready to pour out. There is a hearty laugh to be had very often with a good brother of St. Francis in his brown cowl and incomprehensible accumulation of vermin. But where is the man or woman who could laugh with a Jesuit or a Dominican—the good laugh from the heart, I mean,—which means that *quo-ad* the joke in question we are in full accord? I have tried it with a Cistercian; a magnificent six-foot jolly giant in white robes, who was selling me some celestial liqueur such as only monks and nuns can make all the world over—but the Padre was not to be got very far on the road to a joke. Not so a Capuchin, who took on himself to encourage me to do penance, so that I might go to heaven, for (as he explained) if one wants ever to get there, "*ci vuole far penitenza.*" "How ought I to do penance?" said I, very innocently. "In the first place," said the good Franciscan, "you must go barefoot as I do; that is a most im-

portant matter." "Oh, Padre mio," I exclaimed, "excuse me. I hope to go to heaven *con buoni stivaletti*" (showing him a very stout pair of English boots qualified to cope with the pavement of Rome). The idea of going to Paradise in Balmorals so tickled the fancy of my Franciscan, that he went into fits of uproarious laughter which echoed down the chambers where we were standing—the grim chambers of bones and mummies in the convent of the Capuccini at Rome—and not a little startled the visitors who happened to be at the further end.

Every sort of droll story is told of these poor fellows in Italy. On one occasion, one of them was preaching very vehemently, having, as usual, on one side of his pulpit a small crucifix. By some ill chance, in the very climax of the sermon, Policinello came round a neighbouring street, and the Italian congregation undergoing the invincible attraction of that sublime drama, which may be said to be the great national tragedy of Italy and England, gradually sidled away from the preacher to look at Punch. Finding, at last, that half his audience had dissolved itself, the poor Franciscan, outraged in his ten-

derest feelings, caught up the crucifix with his left hand, and, striking it vehemently with his right, exclaimed, "Ecco! fratelli miei! do not run away after that wretched show—*Ecco il vero Policinello!*"*

On another occasion, a Capuchin preaching on St. Lawrence's day, struck out a really novel figure of rhetoric. We have all had enough of orators who suppose that they *saw* wondrous scenes or *heard* sounds of woe or victory, but it was reserved for this good monk to *smell* a holy martyr with the nose of the imagination. Stretching over his pulpit on three sides successively, he commenced his discourse like the giant in the story of Jack and the Bean-stalk, by sniffing violently, and exclaiming "*Sento carne!*" (I smell flesh.) Then, inquiringly, "*E lesso?*" (Is it boiled?) Sniff, Sniff, Sniff. "*Nò non è lesso!*" (No, it is not boiled.) Sniff, Sniff, Sniff. "*E arrostito?*" (Is it roast?) Sniff. *Sì! E arrostito! O, Lorenzo, che brugia il fuoco,* etc.! (Yes! It is roast. Oh, Lawrence burning in the fire, etc.) The effect upon the audience was tremendous. Surely the hint might be of use to

* Here is the true Punch.

some orators in our country in want of a figure of rhetoric not as yet exhausted and run to the death.

Some other monkish sermons I have heard of are hardly less absurd, and much more mischievous in doctrine. One of them, of deplorable impiety, was preached some few years ago in Naples, in honour of St. Joseph. The lesson it was intended to enforce was the especial advantage to be derived from paying devotion to that saint. A great sinner, the preacher affirmed, had died not long before, a man who had committed all sorts of crimes, but he had diligently offered in his lifetime a large amount of candles and intercessions to San Giuseppe, and when he was dead they were not forgotten. God sent the sinner to hell, but St. Joseph would not give up his votary and went to hell after him. After St. Joseph went the Virgin, who would not stay behind when her husband was gone; and after the Virgin went Christ, who would not leave his mother. Then all the angels and archangels went after Christ till Heaven was left empty. So God was *obliged* to forgive the sinner, and let him come to Heaven, that St. Joseph and Mary and Christ

and the angels might all return along with him, and not leave Paradise unpeopled for ever!

Vice and superstition among the clergy are not, however, alas! their sole defects. The cruelty of priests is almost proverbial all the world over. Debarred from the most endearing and softening domestic ties, and forming among themselves a close corporation with interests apart from those of the community, they have ever been pitiless and remorseless in the persecution of their foes. In Rome the malignant enmity of the Government and its relentless oppression of political opponents is a matter so well recognised, that it is an every day occurrence to hear, when a man has offended them in the smallest way, (by not illuminating his house, for instance, on some Papalino demonstration), "Ah! poor fellow, his fate is settled. Priests never forgive." An instance of cruelty not acted in Rome, but sanctioned by Roman authorities, occurred in Vienna in 1858, and is well worth recording.

A Jewish lady had a child which her own health did not permit her to nurse. She and her husband had for many years longed for the little one, and now he was born their great re-

joicings were checked by the difficulty of procuring for him proper nourishment. It was a delicate baby, for whom nothing would answer but the natural food, and at the time, as it happened, no Jewish nurse could be procured. With some trouble, however, and the help of abundant money, a Catholic woman was found ready to undertake the office, and the infant appeared to thrive very well in her charge. Presently the parents were horrified at being told by the wet-nurse that her priest had positively forbidden her to feed the Jewish child. She dared not do so again! The father instantly applied to the priest, then to his ecclesiastical superiors, to rescind this cruel order, which he justly represented was equivalent to a sentence of death upon his child. It was of no avail. No Christian woman could be allowed to nurse an infidel's baby, unless, indeed, he would consent to give it up to be baptised and educated as a Christian. The hours passed, and the poor little feeble creature, refusing to take the only food its parents could offer, grew ill and convulsed. The Jews in Vienna made every possible exertion to obtain the revocation of the order to

the nurse, and telegraphed to Rome that interest might be made with the Church authorities. It was all in vain. There was no mercy with the priests, and the Austrian government would not interfere with them. Before the ensuing night the poor father and mother had the misery of seeing their only child expire of hunger before their eyes.

Nemesis, however, in this case overtook at least some of the guilty parties. Almost immediately after the death of the Jewish child, the same Government which had declined to interfere between the Catholic priesthood and their victims, found itself in need of large sums to carry on the war then beginning in Italy. Of course it was to the great Jewish houses it applied for the loan; but M. Rothschild, nobly adopting as his own the wrong done to his *coreligionaire*, refused to afford Austria any assistance. In vain were all persuasions,—no Jewish money could then be obtained, and Magenta and Solferino came to pass while the Austrian coffers were gaping for supplies, which (as M. Rothschild himself told my informant) the cruel behaviour of the government on the

occasion of the Jewish child's death, coupled with the affair of Mortara, prevented him from granting.

The lesson was not thrown away. The Jews in Austria will doubtless never again, in their present advanced political position, be compelled by any government to submit to similar wrongs on the part of the priesthood of Rome.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PADRE PASSAGLIA.

CARLO PASSAGLIA, or, as he is called by his friends (according to a custom common among the Italian nobility) Don Carlo, is the son of the late General Passaglia, a Lucchese gentleman, having good estates in Lucca and a palace in Florence. The family is an old one, and belongs to that class in Italy which (whether titled or otherwise) corresponds with our landed gentry. Don Carlo, having only a sister, and no brother, his father's property would naturally have devolved upon him, exclusive of the small dowry paid thirty years ago to daughters. His choice of the priesthood was, therefore, a great divergence from custom. It seems that, in his childhood, he was a studious and religious boy, much attracted by ecclesiastical ceremonies, but his final decision was made under circumstances

with a little dash of romance curious to attach to the character of the great Catholic theologian—the Dante who was to descend through all the tortuous *giri* of Patristic lore, and find the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception at the bottom—had also in his boyhood a Beatrice, a bright particular star (aged, we believe about sixteen when he was twelve), whose charms and merits made profound impression on Carlo's heart. "Dante's" affection was warm and constant for a long period in his young life, till in an evil hour, Beatrice, like her forerunner, proved untrue. An old rich nobleman, whom by no idolatry of fancy could Carlo think she really loved, obtained her hand, and at the marriage ceremony, which he stoically attended, the heart of the boy of thirteen formed, in its bitterness, the terrible resolution to give up such dreams for ever, and become a priest. A *Life of Ignatius Loyola*, lately perused, and doubtless compiled with the express purpose of attracting young converts, decided his vocation in the direction of the College of Jesuits. He thereupon gave himself up to severe study, and soon obtained remarkable success. At seventeen he was already

giving lectures very numerously attended. When the time came for him at the end of his noviciate to adopt definitely the habit of the Society of Jesus, he was called upon to make the sacrifice of his whole inheritance, or else relinquish his Order. Not that it is to be supposed that the Jesuits would have objected in the smallest degree to admit a wealthy convert into their company, but the wise Leopoldine Laws of Tuscany had foreseen that this generous readiness on their part, might possibly be sometimes stretched so far as to lead them even to take measures especially to induce young men of fortune to enter the Society of Jesus, and had provided for such a contingency by making it imperative on the convert in such cases to transfer the whole of his real property to some member of his family. How far such legislation in the unimpeachably Catholic country of Tuscany lends any colour to the cruel assertions of Protestants, concerning the probity of the Romish Orders, we may perhaps be allowed to pause and reflect. Unquestionably, if the interests of the community at large were equally regarded by the R.R. P.P. with those of their society; or that Catholic legisla-

tors thought that those of the community and the Society were one; there would have been small need for encumbering the statute book of Tuscany by any such provision. However this may be, young Passaglia found himself obliged to choose between the black gown and vow of obedience of the Jesuit and the inheritance of an estate valued at 200,000 scudi, or about £45,000 sterling; a large sum for Italy and not a small one anywhere. The choice was made, and Don Carlo entered the fraternity, of which he remained a member for nearly thirty years, inclusive of his novitiate. This fact ought assuredly to be borne in mind in every estimate of this remarkable man. In his own line of religious devotion he has shown quite as much disinterestedness as Garibaldi has done in secular affairs. If the one has refused to be rewarded for his patriotism, the other has first sacrificed a large fortune to serve, as he doubtless supposed, the cause of God; and then, when this sacrifice, at the end of thirty years, led him within the grasp of a sceptre, more powerful than that of any of the kings of the earth,—the staff of General of the Jesuits,—he again relinquished his

prospects of ambition at the call of duty, and sank into the simple Catholic priest, separated from his mighty Order, and (as his chiefs told him) "powerless as the stick taken out of the bundle and ready to be broken by hands which could not have touched it before."

Once affiliated to the Jesuits, Passaglia went to Rome and pursued patiently the studies of Patristic, and mediæval theology, which gradually raised him to the greatest eminence in the Catholic Church, so that when the Pope desired to find authority for establishing his favourite dogma, of the Immaculate Conception, it was to Don Carlo he naturally applied, *not* as it may be supposed, as if the young Jesuit were personally specially devoted to the interests of the Madonna, and anxious to procure for her all the honour which is understood to come from being born unlike other people, but simply because he was known to be the most learned of living divines in the peculiar literature appertaining to such matters. This was indeed the case, as the stupendous tomes of erudition he produced on the occasion amply demonstrated; tomes which were hailed with delight by the clergy who up-

held the dogma, and which ensured for Passaglia the strong personal friendship of the Pope for many years,—till the champion of the Immaculate Virgin became the enemy of the Temporalities of the Holy See.

It is, perhaps, hard for us in England to estimate fairly the value of learning, such as that possessed by a man like Passaglia; it seems and *is* so perfectly abstracted from all the real interests of life, and, indeed, from anything deserving the name of Truth at all. If we heard of a man who knew all the controversies from Ptolemy to Descartes about the vortices of the planet Venus, and had made the most accurate measurements of the size which each philosopher maintained that imaginary vortex ought to have been, and where and how it might impinge (had it existed) on other vortices (had any such been found in the universe), then, indeed, we may parallel the learning employed in demonstrating from the Fathers and Schoolmen the dimensions of the ultramundane and mysterious nimbus they have pleased to attach to the brows of the simple Mary of Nazareth. Still, vain and dreary as it is, this learning is doubtless not acquired without many

meritorious mental conquests, and an amount of training of the memory which all of us must envy. As to the *reasoning* powers of the human mind, whether they exert themselves better or worse in the vacuum of such speculations, may be a question. To perform the processes of logic with *no* ground at all whereon to erect any proposition whatever, must needs be an arduous, if, possibly, a not very serviceable proceeding.

The triumphant success of Passaglia, in proving that the Virgin was immaculately conceived, was immediately followed by the proclamation, or, as the Pope more delicately phrased it in Latin, the *definition* of the dogma. Having received from the seven hundred bishops of Catholic Christendom affirmative answers (in all but a handful of cases) to the query he had sent them, "Did they believe the Virgin immaculate?" and having found five hundred to advise further that the doctrine should be immediately announced, he considered it needless to defer the much desired ceremony whereby the "Queen of Heaven" was to be advanced so far in the honour of earth. True that the letters of the bishops hardly realised the requisite authorisation of an œcumenical

Council. To establish a dogma of any kind, it had been always affirmed that it was requisite to unite Pope and Council together—not the Pope without the Council, or the Council without the Pope, but both in harmony. Then that Divine Spirit, promised to every two or three gathered in Christ's name, and emphatically assured to the united Church, was (it was thought) inevitably present and the Inspirer of all decrees. How far any one conversant in the history of the various Œcumenical Councils, from Ephesus to Trent, could persuade themselves that indeed God's love and wisdom ruled in these assemblies of crafty and cruel men it is hard to think. Still, the opinion was received, and the Pope, in passing it by, and inventing his plan of letters of acquiescence, ran no small risk of his work being hereafter questioned. The device was, indeed, prompted by a well-grounded fear lest a real Council assembled in the flesh might have caused no small difficulty and disturbance. It was not, perhaps, a very fit subject to discuss in Parliamentary form, that same dogma, though Councils of priests have rarely been awed by any sanctity of theme from expending their eloquence even on

the most awful mysteries of the nature of the Triune God. But, in any case, the Pope's queries and the Bishop's responses, were somewhat such a transaction, as if Lord Palmerston were to send the draught of a pet ministerial Bill to all members of Parliament by the penny post, with a request they would attach "aye" thereto, with their signatures; and that, in the intervals of grouse shooting, Workhouse Boards, farming, hunting, croquet, and other senatorial pursuits, the M.P.'s sent back the document with "All Right" endorsed thereon, followed by their honoured names; whereupon the Queen should attach her signature, and the Bill become law.

It must have been a singular scene that in which this marvellous dogma was "defined." As many Monsignori, and high dignitaries of the Church, as could be collected without danger, were gathered in St. Peter's; and the delighted Pio IX, trembling with excitement and shedding floods of tears, took his seat on that famous Chair from which the very authority of *ex Cathedra* declarations has become proverbial. Did that same Chair, under its covering of cloth of gold, shake under the surprising words which that day issued from

between its arms? That is the chair on which Champollion (*teste* Lady Morgan) avers that he read in Arabic letters, engraved upon the back, the great Moslem symbol of faith, "La Allah illah Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!"

Oh, dark-minded Saracen, who affirmed that there was "no god but God"! From that very Chair was to proceed the decree that there are no less than Four Persons, sinless and stainless, the rightful claimants of human prayers! Rome had been inundated for months with the supplications men were to use to the Madonna, and Litanies in which, after addresses to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it was added, "Io vi adoro Maria Santissima, Sposa dell' Spirito Santo," and arguments enough to confound the most rebellious intellect were pressed on the public. "Enoch was certainly immaculate, or he could not have been taken to heaven without going through Purgatory. But would the Holy Ghost have made any man immaculate, and not have done at least as much for his own Divine Spouse? It is impossible. If Enoch went to heaven, Mary was conceived without sin."—Q. E. D.*

* Such (as we have been assured by a gentleman at

All was ready at last, and the tearful Pope finally announced to Christendom that, beyond all doubt, the Virgin was immaculately conceived. The glorious news impressed the world differently. Everywhere the more fanatically-minded rejoiced, and erected in France, Belgium, and Italy an infinite number of columns, on the top of each of which there is a Madonna, and sometimes (as in Rome) round the base a few Old Testament prophets, who look up with a surprise very natural to Moses, David, and Isaiah, at seeing, at the end of three thousand years, the first commandment abrogated, and a Nazarene woman put over their heads.

But though the Jesuits aided the Pope in this matter, and the Capuchins (who ages before had continually volunteered to undergo the ordeal in behalf of her immaculateness) were in ecstacies of joy, the Dominicans, and the more learned clergy generally, were a good deal disgusted. They did not doubt the Madonna—oh, no! nobody did that, save heretics; yet they felt it was hardly a judicious thing, in the nineteenth cen-

Rome at the time) was actually one of the arguments distributed as described.

tury, to add another dogma to the bundle, already tolerably heavy, which weighed on the Catholic world. Could they not leave things as they were? Open questions left in Churches afford the most wholesome safety-valves. When they are shut down close, with legal penalties to keep them secure, it sometimes happens that "when the fire kindles" there is an explosion. Anyway, the Immaculate Conception offers a field for Protestant satire, and is a needless weight added to the load on the Catholic mind. Who knows but it may prove the straw which breaks that much-enduring animal's back?

When Pio IX was turned out of Rome in '48, Passaglia had fled at the same time, and travelled in Germany and England. He returned with the Pope, and grew in his graces and in the strong personal friendship of the General of the Jesuits, till, at the beginning of the troubles between the Papal See and Piedmont, the Pope sent him to negociate with Cavour, in hopes of arriving at some *mezzo termine* agreeable to all parties. This was the turning-point of Don Carlo's life, and it is to his honour to think that the great patriot-statesman of Italy found in

him, not an impracticable diplomatist, but a man who (Jesuit though he was) had a mind open to see the true interests of his country, and a heart to embrace their cause, even to the destruction of his own career. Passaglia returned to Rome to strive as well as he might to aid a friendly understanding. After a time he declared himself opposed to the Temporal Power, and used his learning to prove it was a thing unsupported by the authority of the Fathers. Then began the war against him. He retired from the ranks of the Jesuits (whether before or after his first attack on the Temporal Power, I am uncertain), and the anger of that tremendous Society was bitter indeed. The English Catholic lady, at whose house he then resided as her chaplain, received private information *from priests* that she must secure that he should eat nothing but eggs for some days, since no other precaution would suffice to guard him from poison. The Palazzo Spada, where they resided, was entered by gens-d'armes, and when the lady asked to see the warrant, and sent the officer away till he should produce it, the house was beset and watched by a whole troop. Woman's wit and friendly aid,

however, were able to baffle the enemy. Before the warrant arrived for Passaglia's apprehension, he had passed from the apartments occupied by Mrs. F. into the other portion of the Palazzo Spada. There—where in the great desolate hall, with its faded frescoes, stands the awful statue of Pompey with his outstretched arm (the statue at whose feet it is believed that Cæsar fell)—in one of the innumerable apartments of the palace, Passaglia was concealed. Next night the owner gave a large party to all the fashionables in Rome. The police were in despair, for, amidst all the comings and goings, and crowds of servants and carriages, their prey might escape from his lair and disappear. Their fears were well founded. The Principé and Principessa T—— entered one of the apartments, escorted by the noble owner; and soon afterwards, the Principessa T—— left it on the arm of a gentleman in the dress of the Prince, who entered her carriage with her, and drove away in perfect safety, leaving the Prince to follow when he had comfortably donned his host's attire!

After spending the rest of the night in a safe hiding place, Passaglia started at dawn in a small

carretta, with a servant whose dress and his own were nearly alike. They passed unquestioned through the Porta del Popolo, drove fast to the Ponte Molle, and, beyond it, found three other servants of the T——s, well equipped for the journey, and having with them a led horse for the fugitive. Away they galloped—dreading, of course, every figure on the road. At last, when nearly overcome with fatigue, they reached the frontier, and managed by crossing the fields at night to evade discovery. Next morning Passaglia was welcomed with open arms by the people of free Italy, and his further journey was a continual ovation. In every town the authorities came to pay him their respects and express to him their sympathy. His cousin, to whom he had made over his paternal inheritance, and who, being now married and with many children, could not restore him the bulk of it, offered him 20,000 scudi, which henceforth secured his independence. He proceeded to Turin, and soon organised the scheme of a liberal party in the Church. Between that time and this (a period of three years) nine thousand two hundred clergy have signed his famous petition against the

Temporal Power, and may be reckoned as his definite adherents. These men are all subject to infinite vexations, and often to absolute ruin (by the withdrawal of their clerical functions) from their ecclesiastical superiors, and they receive no favour, or even support against such tyranny, by the national government. There must needs therefore be some sterling stuff in them generally, although their rank, socially and intellectually, does not seem to be often considerable, and undoubtedly some unworthy libertines have chosen to enter their ranks. To aid his cause Passaglia publishes two journals, *La Pace*, a small daily sheet, discussing ecclesiastical and political matters, as our *Record*, *Patriot*, and *Inquirer* do, and the *Mediatore*, a weekly octavo brochure, containing learned articles of his own, and letters from his friends. At present it has been occupied for some time in very dry disquisitions on the rather unpromising theme of the accuracy of M. Renan's statements in the *Vie de Jésus*. Two years ago Passaglia commenced a series of sermons in Milan which excited great interest, but the Archbishop forbade him to complete the course. He has now long

ceased to exercise clerical functions of any kind, although he gives Lectures constantly as Professor, and is not regularly excommunicated.

Passaglia's election to a seat in the Italian Parliament, is thought by some of his friends to be a hindrance to his work as an ecclesiastical reformer. He speaks always in a scholastic style of argument, unsuited to anything but an ancient Church Council, and curiously out of place in a modern senate, where the question is not how old authorities decided a question, but how the clearest good sense of our time will do so. Of course his main work is to obtain relief from the oppression of their superiors, for the nine thousand two hundred clergy who follow his banner. He is persuaded that, were the government to afford these (its true friends) any measure of protection—not to speak of favour, they would be followed immediately by thousands of other priests, who now do not venture to risk the losses of all means of support which such partisanship with freedom incurs. He assured me that hundreds of the liberal clergy were on the verge of actual want—many of his personal friends living on a franc a day, in consequence

of the withdrawal by their ecclesiastical superiors of the privilege of performing the functions by which they gained their livelihood. The refusal of the government and parliament to afford these men any redress appears marvellously short-sighted, and can only be reconciled, either with entire indifference to Church matters and disinclination to meddle with them (a disinclination not displayed when convents are to be suppressed and Church property appropriated), or else to a latent conviction that, to use a popular phrase, by giving the Church of Rome "rope enough" it will end in destroying itself in the opinion of the nation, and that it is most desirable to do nothing to check that impending strangulation! Assuredly many enlightened people in Italy think that the longer the wrongs of the Temporal Power are allowed to go on, the more speedy and complete will be the downfal of the double tyranny of Romanism. To this, of course, Passaglia vehemently objects, asserting with emphasis that it is not only Popery but Religion itself which suffers every day the Pope remains the Temporal Master of Rome. In the interest of piety and morality themselves he claims that

this monstrous evil be ended by the joint labours of ecclesiastics and laymen: the laymen's part being to support the priests in their denunciation of it.

This question of the Temporal Power is at present the great aim of all Passaglia's labours. The corresponding reform of the Celibacy of the Clergy, which we in England have been led to think of equal interest to him (as it is undoubtedly of much greater importance to the whole Catholic world), is in his estimation a matter which may lie by for future agitation. The new Code now preparing will make Marriage a Civil Contract, and (if it contain no clause to the contrary) the priests who may choose to marry, will find it possible to do so with the aid of any Syndic sufficiently liberal to give his signature to the contract. But Padre Passaglia does not think one hundred priests will avail themselves of the law, nor that they ought to do so. They could only marry *out* of the Church, not with the Church's sanction, and this he would by no means commend. It might be lawful, but as St. Paul said, "All things lawful were not expedient." The sanction of the Church, which could alone render the mar-

riage of priests fitting, could only be obtained by a General Council. No real Council has been held since that of Trent, and Passaglia earnestly desires that one might be gathered hereafter, to abolish the enforced celibacy of the clergy, and make other reforms. He deprecates all reforms made *against* the Hierarchy, saying that at best they may be *outside* of the Hierarchy, but never (lawfully) in opposition to it; such opposition is "the sin of schism". As to any doctrinal changes, Passaglia desires none whatever, and assured me personally of his entire belief in the whole dogmatic theology of the Church. His aims are purely *disciplinary*, not doctrinal, and only disciplinary so far as the fundamental constitution of the Church sanctions reform, or rather, return to more primitive arrangements.

Passaglia is an exceedingly handsome man; tall, resolute, and powerful-looking; reminding me of a certain Bishop who has aimed at far deeper and bolder reform in England. But his countenance is exactly the reverse in point of expression, being anything but calculated peculiarly to engage confidence. The massive square jaw, and somewhat narrower high forehead, are

singular. His manners are very dignified; and assuredly the beautiful Tuscan language never sounded more perfect than from his lips. It is *divine* Italian! Altogether, there are not a great many men in the world more remarkable in various ways than Don Carlo Passaglia.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### MADONNA IMMACOLATA.

ANY notice of the state of religion in Italy would be very incomplete without an allusion to the marvellous new worship which of late years has nearly assumed the position of the sole living sentiment of the country. Renan was surely right when he said that the real Trinity of modern Roman Catholicism is represented *not* by the nominal pictures of it—setting forth the Father, Sou, and Divine Dove—but by those others so common in Italy, called pictures of the *Madonna Incoronata*. In these last the Father and the Son seated, to the right and the left, place a crown on the head of the Virgin, who stands or kneels to receive it. Theologians in this and many other instances, give us theories and formal dogmas, but Art reveals to us

the thought which lies practically in the heart of mankind, and affords at once evidence of what men are really feeling and thinking, and an historical gallery of what they have felt and thought in past ages. Thus the theoretical Trinity has been replaced by another actually worshipped. And further, the members of this Triad have altered their order of precedence in the popular sentiment within late centuries, and are altering still further even now. The pictures of the Supreme Father, never frequent at any time, at first from Jewish reverence, later too probably from indifference, gave place to the Son represented as the Saviour. Then the Son became only the Infant, and Mary holding him in her arms was the prominent figure. Latterly (and notably since the publication of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception), the Babe has disappeared, and the Virgin stands alone—sometimes with the Seven Swords in her heart—more often, *very* recently, in simple glory, with the crescent moon under her feet, and the stars round her head, and her arms gently opened to receive and bless the world. On every wall of field or street in Italy, may be seen a shrine more

or less humble or imposing, containing behind its wire screen or window, an image of Madonna with some little offering of lamp and flowers before it. On pillars in the country and in the towns, she stands, an object in every point of sight. Let the traveller examine these figures carefully, and he will always find that the old ones, from the bas-reliefs in marble to the poor little blue and yellow majolica images, imitated from Luca della Robbia's work, are Madonnas *with* the Child. The most recent, either handsome or paltry, scarcely ever contain the Bambino at all, it is simply the "Madonna Immabolata." Three or four centuries ago this was apparently far from the case, as the old wooden crosses, covered with the frightful implements of the Crucifixion, (cock and robe, and nails and spear,) and the exquisite iron ones on the way to the Monastery of Valombrosa, sufficiently testify. But equally in Italy, Savoy, and France, the Crosses are nearly all old, the Madonnas nearly all new; and of the Madonnas, those with the Child are oldest, those without the Child, newest of all. No one questions, I believe, the fact, that Mariolatry is every day growing in the South of Europe. Catholics

regard the fact generally with satisfaction. Evangelical Protestants raise their hands in horror, and adduce it as evidence of the Apocalyptic abominations of Rome. To the philosophic enquirer into the religious history of our race, the subject seems to demand a very careful and unprejudiced investigation. How has this modification of Christianity occurred? Is it the work of priests, or have priests (as much oftener happens) only gone with the tide of human sentiments and aided, but not determined their direction? Why or wherefore, from what unfathomed deep in our common nature, or from what local and temporary "wind of doctrine", over southern nations in our century, has this current of emotion arisen? It is not in a trifling work like the present that these questions can be examined, but a few reflections on the matter can hardly be out of place in any book treating of the present state of things in Italy.

I have beside me a little pamphlet of rather singular character. It is entitled *Ritratto di Maria in Cielo*, and is published by the Protestant party in Florence, 1863. The frontispiece consists of a rather artistic woodcut,

representing a woman of some sixty years old, much worn by care and suffering, but serene in piety and resignation. The book itself contains an innocent romance about an abbess and a painter, who both arrived at the discovery that the Virgin Mary, at her death, must have been very much older than Raphael depicts her; in fact, very like the figure in the frontispiece; and that all the sorrows she underwent, and the children she bore, could not have failed to leave her very much wrinkled and faded. Of course, as she was carried up by bodily Assumption into Heaven, we are justified in arguing from her looks at death to her present looks in paradise. There are some curious suggestions about this little book. Certainly the ideal Madonna is very different from what any body supposes the historical Mary of Nazareth to have been. She is and must always be, a beautiful and noble woman, in whom the purity of the Virgin, and the dignity of the Mother,—all that is most Divine in Humanity, and most human in Divinity, is united. Make Mary old and plain, and she can no longer be Madonna. The Italian Protestant is quite wise in his generation to take

up this line of the argument; immeasurably wiser than the Irish Protestant who only quotes texts against idolatry, and elaborately demonstrates that the Apostles never worshipped the Virgin. If Catholics could but be persuaded that their beautiful, stately Queen of Heaven was ever an aged and care-worn Syrian peasant, there would be an amazing change in their sentiments. Her poverty and humble position they can admit, nay, revere as something sacred. The assertion of the mischievous Jews, in the Toldot-Jeschut, that she was a milliner, the evidence in the Gospels that she was a simple village carpenter's wife, does not disturb them. There is no such feeling now in the Christian world such as that which in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries made the Spaniards reach the supreme climax of moral vulgarity by transforming her into a Duchess, and the fishermen-Apostles into Marquises of Galilee and Barons of Bethany.* Mary may be poor and simple of degree, without detraction

* In the palace of the Duke of Medina Cœli there is a picture of the Virgin in brocaded silk, exchanging compliments with the founder of the family. He motions to her to take precedence; but she draws back, and says, "Advance, sir! You are the Head of my House."

from her glory. But one thing she must not be —ugly.

Here is, perhaps, some clue to the mystery of the apotheosis by two-thirds of Christendom of a humble woman, to whom, so far as history or even tradition goes, we do not owe *directly* a single lesson, and whom naturally we should have expected to have been honoured only in the reflection of her Son's honour, yet who practically has eclipsed that Son in the hearts of millions. The Ideal Mary has actually hardly a point of material historic fact to grow out of. But, in truth, such air-plants as ideal characters—men transformed into idealisations of manhood, women made idealisations of womanhood—thrive in the souls of their worshippers all the more freely and vigorously, perhaps, when there is less of the earth at their roots. Mary of Nazareth has grown into the Madonna Immacolata, "Heaven's Queen and Mother both," and taken the place of Isis, Astarte, Ceres—all the mother-gods of old, possibly all the more easily, because the four Evangelists pass over her story in a few brief words. Be this as it may, it is certain that the historical Mary seems to have very little attraction for the

most devoted adorers of the Madonna and the Panaghia. Every traveller must have noticed with the same amazement as myself, how the crowds of Greek and Latin pilgrims in Jerusalem rush round the Sacred Places all day long, bowing here, kneeling there, crossing, prostrating themselves,—gabbling over the prayers which are to be of special avail spoken in such localities, like Barak's "Curse me them *from thence.*" No question of criticism; no hesitation as to the genuine spot ever flits across their gaping faces. "Here is the place where Judas gave the kiss," or "where St. Veronica offered her handkerchief"—it is all equally satisfactory. But the Virgin's Tomb,—a relic having quite as good claims as the rest, shrined in a little Gothic chapel, built by the Crusaders close to Gethsemane,—nobody ever seems to visit; or, if visited at all, it is but as one of the minor "lions"; not, as might have been expected, as second to, or equal with, the Holy Sepulchre itself. The door is constantly closed, and no guardian monk is in attendance either for his own devotions, or for the purpose of opening it for any casual pilgrim's *backshish.* Hardly could the same thing happen regarding any other

Catholic church or shrine, however humble, in any southern land. It is not, then, the remains of the dead Mary of Nazareth these pilgrims from every country in Europe desire to worship.* They adore the memorials of Christ's career with almost fanatical enthusiasm, but the Madonna (to whom at home they say ten prayers for one addressed to her Son) they do not care to think about as having lived and died in that place, a simple woman of Nazareth, such as those whose sweet faces they may, perhaps, see any day in the streets of Jerusalem.

— There is a cause which Protestants are accustomed to allege as the proximate one for Mariolatry. It is said that Catholics are afraid or

* Some weight should, perhaps, be given to the influence of the popular belief that Mary had, like her Son, a Resurrection from the grave and bodily Ascension into heaven. This idea—exemplified in many great paintings, and notably in Titian's gorgeous Assumption at Venice—belongs to an early age, and may be fitly considered as the *double-rainbow* of the story of Christ—the repeated reflection of the beautiful thought, thrown out by Hope on the falling tears of grieving friends. But, as the idea of Christ's bodily Resurrection has not prevented his sepulchre from being the chosen shrine of Christendom since the days of Helena, it does not appear why that of Mary should have prevented her tomb from being a place of pilgrimage, resorted to with a fervour proportioned to her relative share of adoration.

ashamed to pray to God or to Christ for the gratification of their lower desires, but that they think they may ask of the Virgin, as of an over-indulgent human mother, every kind of thing they may covet—money, honour, success in love, vengeance, or a prize lottery ticket. Thus people pray to Mary out of wickedness, not virtue; and the favour in which her worship is found is a standard to gauge the depravity of the age.

'There is, I suppose, *some* degree of truth in this view. No doubt school girls, French and Italian (as they have told me themselves), do pray to the Virgin with the full sanction of their convent-school teachers, for new frocks, bon-bons, escape from punishment and specially delightful holidays. "La chère Sainte Vierge," addressed by a young child who brings her a rose and talks to her as to a fairy godmother, is supposed to be full of infinite good-nature and not to be offended by the very idlest requests. Also it is certain that men and women of the ignorant classes continually pray to the Virgin for all sorts of things which we disconnect utterly from the notion of religion. The number of wax candles on many shrines would dwindle if it were

known that the Madonna would not hearken to petitions for lucky lottery tickets. Flowers would be more scarce on her altars did it escape that she never aided the course of love (true or otherwise) to run more smoothly than it was disposed. Brigands would buy fewer leaden images of her, blessed by his Holiness, to hang round their necks, were they aware that she does not arrange that rich travellers be robbed even by her most faithful adherents. Take away the Paganism off the thing—(a Paganism quite as gross and absurd as any belonging to the ancestors of the Italians two thousand years ago)—and Mariolatry would certainly lose a number of votaries. But would the worship of the Madonna therefore cease? When all these silly and superstitious and wicked people were turned away from her altars, would those altars be wholly deserted? I do not believe anything of the kind. I do not believe that the adoration of the Virgin Mary, any more than any other strong religious impulse of humanity, springs mainly from evil or low feelings. However degraded it has been, and as every worship *must* eventually be which is addressed to any being save the Ho-

liest, it does not arise from degraded motives. If it had been so it would not have been on a *Virgin Mother* that would have gathered the halo of Deity. Men may pray to the Madonna Immacolata to help them in profligacy, and erect her temple as *Notre Dame de la Haine*, where they may ask her for revenge on their enemies. But if profligates and assassins had invented a religion they would not have committed the incongruity of putting up a Holy Virgin to listen to such prayers. Others than they have made the idol they honour—honour with such simple stupidity that they commonly imagine there are as many Madonnas in heaven as there are images of her on earth. If they heard that there was another more potent witch or fairy, they would transfer their homage to her, like Browning's Caliban; but those who have *made* Mary, the Catholic "Queen of Heaven," would remain faithful to her; and her worship, more pure, would be none the less fervent than it is now. We must look for the source of Mariolatry higher up in human nature than this muddy rill of selfish passion which has dribbled into it.

Some Egyptologers affirm that the belief in

One only God was from earliest times received by the educated classes, and that the polytheism of the people was nothing more than the separation of the Attributes of the One God and their worship as distinct Deities: Osiris being His goodness, Ammon His creative power, Thoth His wisdom, and so on. The theory finds support from the fact that nearly all the separate gods of the Pantheon seem to have been grouped in Triads as the local deities of the different towns, and interchanged one with another in the various Triads, in a way very natural if they were only symbols of the attributes of One God, but equally perplexing if they were understood to be distinct beings. Whether this view of Egyptian theology be correct or otherwise, it affords at all events a good parallel to what has taken place more or less under many other creeds. Man needs for his God just so many attributes as at the stage of his progress he perceives to be Divine. First, Retributive Justice and Power; then Wisdom; then Clemency and Mercy; at last, perfect Love. The epoch at which a new conception is to be added to the old must always be one of religious excitement proportioned to the

religious earnestness of the nation which receives it and of its advance towards monotheism. A fresh Ganesa or Avatur of Vishnu was doubtless added to Braminism, a Minerva or Prometheus to Greek mythology, without disturbance or difficulty. But when the Jews added to their conceptions of Jehovah the idea of the Father of *All* men—when the Arabs took in the thought of the absolute Sovereignty of Allah—there were the stupendous revolutions of Christianity and Islam. Probably, if we could discern their sources, we should find that, at bottom, all the stirrings of religious change, the enthusiastic devotion to new found Gods (such as Mithras and Serapis), by the old heathens, and the rise of the great Orders of Catholicism and Sects of Protestantism, pointed to some modification of, or rather accretion to, the prior idea of God.

Not to press this thought too far, we may at least admit, that a Theology which does not make place for all the great Attributes which the human consciousness and Reason announce to us as belonging to our Maker, must remain a Theology liable to disturbance and modification whenever its deficiency becomes sensible. If it

be a dogmatic Theology, professing to contain the whole scheme of Divine things, then it must either perish or submit to the scandal of adding a new Dogma to its canon. Only a Theology which professes itself incomplete, and leaves room for fresh truths, can admit of *constitutional* Progress without such Revolutions. At this hour the Church of England heaves in the struggle to admit the modern idea of Divine Goodness, that is, of a Goodness which must exclude the existence of Hell. The heart of the nation presses for the reception of the new idea. The clergy vehemently refuse it entrance, and thereby do their uttermost to make the Reform a Revolution. The Church of Rome, a few years ago, was disturbed by the popular outcry for the authorisation of a doctrine which, in fact, amounted to the apotheosis of a Feminine Divinity. The Pope took up the cause, and stopped all further struggle by proclaiming to astonished Catholics that a New Dogma had been *defined* —the Virgin was born Immaculate. Very absurd, and very pitiful, in some respects, was this great Romish movement; but under the guise of a tenet only fit for the diseased imaginations

of mediæval monks to have invented, it is possible we may find there lurked some Idea whose development marked a real step in the progress of Catholic Christendom. "The world never apostatizes." Designing priests, politic Popes, fanatic monks and nuns have not *made* Mariolatry, only fostered it. Mariolatry means something beyond a scheme for the aggrandisement of any Church or Order. It were worth a great deal if we could find out what that meaning really is. A modification of creed, which has been going on in an ever increasing ratio for a thousand years throughout half Christendom, till it has fairly made a new Trinity, and directed all the freshest and most enthusiastic devotion to a new Divinity, is surely a phenomenon worthy of profoundest study. Its cause—could we ascertain it—might avail not a little to throw light on the mysteries of the religious nature of man and the Divine truths towards which (albeit, dimly, and in many a misleading myth and fable) his aspirations must point.

The clue which may, perhaps, guide us some steps in this inquiry, must be the answer to the question, "What is it which Catholics worship

in the Madonna?" It is quite clear, as we have already remarked, that they have idealised her out of all identity with the historical wife of the Nazarene carpenter. The "Blessed Mother of God," "Queen of Heaven," "Star of the Sea," is quite another personage from any recorded by Biblical historians or even Patristic traditionalists. What is this idealised Madonna? If we had found her in Greek, Hindoo, or Egyptian pantheon, how should we have described her? Which Divine Attribute does she represent? There can be little doubt, I think, that the Madonna personifies Goodness, Mildness, Pity, —in a word, Motherly *Tenderness*. She is the representative of all the feminine virtues and perfections, Purity, Simplicity, Humility; but, above these and in pre-eminent degree, of Maternal *Love*. Men worship in the Madonna idealised Motherhood endowed with the blooming beauty and dignity of one of the old Immortal gods, and made mysteriously sacred by the added halo of virginity. She is Ceres and Minerva and Isis and Saraswati in one, and something more than all, as the imagination of modern Europe is more profound and tender than that

of ancient Greece or Egypt or India. In worshipping the Madonna, the Catholic then worships a divinity who stands in his soul's temple for the purest and most tender Love. Power, Wisdom, Sanctity are attributed to her in so far as they are needful to make up the conception of deity, but she is not adored primarily as Powerful, Wise, or Holy,—but as tenderly Loving. She is neither the Creating, Redeeming, nor Sanctifying God. Men do not look on her with awe as Omnipotent, nor with gratitude as a self-sacrificing Saviour, nor does it seem they often pray to her for spiritual Sanctification. They look to her with adoring affection as the most loveable being they conceive in the universe, and they implore her to comfort their sorrows and fulfil their desires, with precisely the same confiding freedom with which they rested their heads on their mother's lap in childhood, or asked of her indulgence the toys they coveted.

The relation of the devotee to the Madonna is simply a repetition of the sweet and tender drama of infancy, acted in after life with a mother crowned with stars and able to grant all entreaties. Mary is addressed as "Parent of God,"

but she is felt rather to be the Universal Mother of Mankind. I have noticed in museums, where considerable numbers of images of Penates have been collected, that most of them were evidently miniature portraits of women; doubtless of the deceased female ancestors of the family, or occasionally, perhaps, of some special benefactresses. The sort of *dulia* paid to these Penates was a perfectly human Mother Worship—death alone had effected such Apotheosis, or rather, Canonisation, as there was. Among the Chinese, as we all know, the worship of deceased parents, male and female, is the most vivid part of the national religion. A different phase of the sentiment is the adoration for a being not the mother of the individual worshiper, but contemplated abstractedly as a representative of Motherhood. The Ephesian Diana, Ceres, and Isis seem to have belonged to this order among the heathens. The Catholic Olympus, beside several canonised human Mothers (among whom St. Monica is most noticeable), gives a supreme place to a Divine Mother in whom,—as all Manhood was incarnated in her Son,—so all Womanhood might be personified. The process by which the his-

torical Mary of Nazareth was transformed into such an ideal of Womanhood is not difficult to understand. If *any* one were to be so transformed in the Catholic theology it could only be the Virgin. As her Son was the new Adam, so must she have been the new Eve. The mystery of her Virgin Motherhood lifted her at once into a region wherein no dignity, however stupendous, could seem altogether out of place. Admitting Christ to be the God-Man, if there were to be a God-woman, it could only be his mother, whom St. Athanasius himself had recognised as "Parent of God". The Child, as in the Chinese custom, ennobled the Parent; nor was there any other human relative to dispute her claims—wife, or daughter, or even sister—specified by the history. The Incarnate Deity *had* a mortal Mother; but for other human ties, they were either non-existent, or explained away by the story. Thus the only candidate for apotheosis in the Catholic theology was Mary of Nazareth. No marvel was it, then, that when the sentiment of the Church demanded the elevation of a new Divinity who should personate the Feminine Attributes, it was on the head of

the Virgin it placed the heavenly crown bestowed by the Father and the Son, and made with "Madonna Incoronata" the new Trinity of Southern Christianity.

What does this wide-spread sentiment, requiring this new divinity, indicate? It can surely only point to the fact that there was something lacking in the elder creed, which, as time went on, became a more and more sensible deficiency, till at last the instinct of the multitude (acting under essentially polytheistic conceptions) filled it up in this amazing manner. Other Divine attributes had been personified before, but Maternal Tenderness had been left out, and after long pressure was thus admitted at last. The position of the highest canonised saint was not sufficient for its representative. She has become, in strictest sense, "the Divine Mother."

There is a great truth and a great error in this wonderful act of Catholic Christendom. The Protestant, who looks on it as mere stupid dereliction and idolatry, is exceedingly mistaken. The Reformed Churches have rather to ask themselves whether, in abjuring Mariolatry, they have not also abjured somewhat with which their

creed can ill dispense. Had the old Egyptians reformed themselves, by abandoning the altars of Osiris (the Divine Goodness), and confining themselves to Ra and Thoth, the representatives of Power and Wisdom, should we have said they gained much by the change while the Goodness of God remained forgotten? The Catholic world has found a great truth—that Love,—motherly tenderness and pity, is a divine and holy thing, worthy of adoration. They have fallen into a great error, by conceiving of it, not as it is, in truth, the character of the One blessed "Parent of Good, Almighty," but as the attribute of another and inferior being. The truth is one the world should learn. The error is an inevitable result of the whole system of Catholic theology; in fact, is the original error of all Polytheism—the attribution to secondary objects of worship of the honour due to the One God alone. How is the truth to be learned—the error to be foresworn? Only in one way. When mankind, at large, receives the blessed faith that *all* goodness and tenderness, as well as justice, and power, and holiness, are absolutely impersonated in God—that *He* is "our Father and our

Mother both," and that we have no need to multiply deities, and invent new gods, since every adorable attribute exists in its plenitude in HIM.

To purify our creed, by simply rejecting any Divine Person, without taking up, at the same time, every Divine idea that Person conveyed to the mind of his worshipper, is impossible. We do not thus attain to more truth, but to less truth. Monotheism is not the *analysis* of Deity, with the reservation of one or more attributes. It is the *synthesis* of all the true conceptions of God ever vouchsafed to man.

How much the world wants this truth, which Catholic Christendom has revealed in its myth of the Virgin's Coronation, there is small need to tell. The heart of humanity longs to rest itself on the compassion of its Creator. We have had enough of hell and "terrors of the Lord." The cry which has come from ten thousand voices of our English clergy in behalf of the dreadful doctrine, does but testify to their sense that its power is passing—nay, has actually passed away. We are sick of such night-mare horrors, and turn away with disgust from the religious systems in which they lie embedded. We crave,

one and all of us, for a God whom we can perfectly, spontaneously, absolutely adore. *That* God is He, and He alone, who unites in one the Father's justice and the Mother's love.

But if we need to adopt the truth, shadowed out by Mariolatry, we cannot blind ourselves to the evils resulting from the errors mixed up therewith. In adding—as it has practically done—a new deity to its Pantheon, the Romish Church has not only gone one step further in Polytheism; it has gone a great way towards severing, even further than hitherto, the bond between morality and religion. Though the belief that the *One* great Judge is *also* our tender Parent, can only serve to help us to better obedience,—the belief that the Judge is a separate God, and our beloved and chosen Deity quite another—is no harmless delusion. Devotion to Mary does not mean at all, necessarily, a seeking for *spiritual* benefits of any kind. Mary may be most ardently worshipped, and her votary, in fact, live in complete adoration of her (*i.e.*, in what he believes to be a highly religious state) with exceedingly little of moral training whatever. Nor is this all. The vile ethics of asceticism are visible

through the whole myth of the Madonna. Albeit a mother, and worshipped precisely because she *is* a mother, it is so managed, that natural, human motherhood, such as God has made it, should receive, not honour, but insult through her. She is a *Virgin;* herself "immaculately conceived." Her pictures must present, not glorious embodiments of maternity, like the old marble Niobe, but impossible combinations, after which the painter toils in vain—the Maiden and the Mother in one. The laws which God has given to our nature, beautiful and sacred as they are; the relations He has made so inexpressibly dear and sweet, are all vilified by this degrading conception. He who would naturally feel that a human mother, pure and good, was the holiest thing in all the world, is bade by every image of the Madonna to believe she is *not* the holiest, *not* the most Divine. She would be holier if God's laws had been set aside, had she been a Virgin-mother. To be Divine she must have escaped—not the weaknesses and frailties of our nature, for of them there is no question, but—the beneficent material laws under which we exist. Is it any marvel that when such ideas are taught by every

symbol of religion which meets the worshipper's eye, his sense of the sanctity of natural purity should be completely perverted? The deification of virginity can never be otherwise than the desecration of marriage.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PROTESTANT ITALY.

THE problem of the success of Protestantism in Italy is one of very large interest. We have all been familiar with the remark that the Great Reformation spread almost at once over all the countries, whose soil seemed filled for its reception, and that for three centuries it has made no important progress in Europe. Political causes have been alleged to explain this phenomenon in a manner which shall reserve the claims of Protestantism to possess an eternal suitability to the wants of humanity—of humanity Latin and Greek, African and Asiatic, no less than Gothic and Teuton. The favourite belief, for instance, that "the blood of the martyrs" must always and invariably prove "the seed of the Church," has been formally relinquished in the case of France, and it is admitted that the

dragonnades of Louis XIV effectually prevented the seed from germinating, and hindered that vast country from receiving the purer doctrines of the Reformation. English malversations and bad management, and Romish activity, have equally to explain the phenomenon of Ireland, still Catholic after two hundred years of Protestant propagandism on the vast scale of the Irish establishment. Belgium, Catholic Germany, and Switzerland, have likewise doubtless their explanations. Still, the fact remains that somehow Protestantism has hitherto only thriven under northern skies, or where the populations partake of a northern character.

Now, in our own time, a new experiment is to be tried on a scale of great magnitude. Italy has hitherto held Protestantism at bay, by a moral *cordon sanitaire* of the strictest kind.* The simplest attempts at Propagandism were met by such prompt and severe repression (as in the cases of Miss Cunningham and the Madiai) that it might justly be said, unless the obnoxious doctrines could enter over the roofs, no door or loophole was left open for it south of the Alps. The case is now reversed. All doors are flung

open. There is an end (except of course in Rome) of any persecution, any repression of the liberty of worship, any obstruction to the free sale of Bibles. Political persecution is over, and of the social sort there exists hardly enough to effect the well-recognised service of binding together the persecuted party. There is literally "a clear stage and no favour" for Protestantism in Italy. Government will neither hinder nor help it. If it have strength to grow, it may grow; if it fail to do so, it will be by its own defect, and by no external repression.

How will this important experiment succeed? It is impossible yet to prognosticate. Two things, however, must be borne in mind, in judging hereafter of the lesson conveyed by the result. First, the Propagandism, conducted liberally enough, is mainly foreign—*i. e.*, it comes either from the old nest of the Waldenses, in the valleys of Piedmont, or else from the missionaries sent by English and Scotch committees, stationed at Nice and Geneva. There is little or no indigenous Protestantism south of Piedmont. Secondly, the form of religion thus propagated, both by Waldenses and English, is exclusively of

the extreme Evangelical type. *Plymoutisti* and *Darbiiti* (as they are absurdly called), the Waldensians and a few *Wesleyani*, are almost the only sects in the field. The High Church English party, I am informed, has despatched a few agents to discuss theology with the Catholic clergy, and persuade them (if possible) that Anglicanism is an improvement on Romanism; but it is solely the Low Churchmen in England and Scotland who support the existing church establishments throughout Italy, and pay the salaries of the preachers, only very partially aided by local subscriptions of the congregations.

Thus the question assumes its simplest shape. Will Evangelical Protestantism, thus fairly planted on Italian soil, take root therein, and spread abroad its branches? If it will do so, the boast of its adherents that it has a divine adaptation to the spiritual wants of humanity, will certainly obtain a very remarkable confirmation. If, on the other hand, it prove that the seed cannot thus grow or flourish, but continues to require perpetual sowing, while producing no corresponding harvests of converts, then it ought to be held equally clearly demonstrated that it is not to

*humanity*, as such, but to special races and classes of minds, that Evangelicalism commends itself, and is acceptable. It is difficult to overestimate the interest of such an experiment.

The following is an accurate account, obtained from several sources, of the state of the Protestant Church in Italy, in 1864:—

1. The Waldenses. Of these there are about 20,000 or 23,000, in their original valleys of Piedmont, and about a thousand or more scattered over Italy. These are all under a central administration.

2. The Chiesa Libera, or Free Church. These differ from the Waldensian churches, not so much in doctrine as in discipline. They are not under any central administration *nominally*, although their pecuniary dependence on foreign support practically brings them under something very like it. Theoretically, each congregation is independent of every other. In some of them it is also theoretically held that there is properly no distinction of clergy and laity, but that any member of the church (not a woman) may address the congregation—as among the Quakers. Only

very slight shades of difference in dogma exist among the various bodies. As I have said, they mostly hold those of the Plymouth Brethren and Darbyites.

3. The Wesleyans. These are sending both money and missionaries somewhat freely from England. They have established a good congregation at Milan, under Mr. Pigott, and aid generally the other churches. The *localities* of the different Protestant congregations throughout Italy are as follows:—

At FLORENCE. The Chiesa Libera, of Gualieri, number about 120 members, and have schools containing forty or fifty children, in part supported by the Wesleyan Mission. Also the Chiesa Libera, of Magrini (a very violent Plymouth Brother) having a congregation of about 150. Also the Chiesa Waldese, which is the central one of the sect, and well filled. It has attached to it schools for boys, girls, and infants, containing eighty children, and a Sunday-school with forty pupils. There is also a "College of Theology," which has sent out nine students to the work of evangelisation.

NAPLES. The Chiesa Libera of Mezzacannone

counts at least 200 members, who contribute regularly to its expenses. The Waldensians have a church with a congregation varying from 80 to 200.

LEGHORN. A Waldensian church, very prosperous, numbering 120 communicants, among whom, of course, are some foreigners residing in the town. Attached to it are two elementary schools for boys and girls, counting 60 pupils; an evening school frequented by 30 soldiers and 50 labourers; a Sunday school; a *Società di Mutuo Soccorso*, and a *Confraternità* to assist the sick and indigent.

LUCCA. A small, very earnest, Waldensian church of 40 persons, which has encountered many difficulties from the bigotry of the priests, who have forced it, three times during the one year of its existence as a church, to change its place of worship. In a population of 30,000, Lucca has 20 convents, and a proportion of one ecclesiastic to every 33 persons.

ELBA. A Waldensian church at *Porto-Ferrajo*, augmented by two-thirds in the last year, and having a school of 15 pupils. At *Rio Marina*, also, a small church of the same sect has been built, and will shortly be opened; and there is a

school of 38 children. The minister of *Rio Marina* serves also a small congregation at *Longone*.

PISA. Two churches, presided over by Signor Perazzi, an ex-priest; and Professor Michelis, formerly an advocate, both of the Chiesa Libera. A Protestant cemetery has been opened here outside the town, in a spot formerly used for the burial of unbaptised infants; and there are schools containing 20 or 30 children.

PERUGIA. A small Waldensian church, which holds its meetings in the refectory of a secularised convent,—to the vast disgust of the Cardinal-bishop.

GENOA. A Chiesa Libera, with 95 communicants; and a Chiesa Waldese, having schools for boys, girls, and infants; a Sunday school, and an evening school. A new church will shortly be opened in the suburb of San Pier d'Arena. De Sanctis and Mazzarella are remarkable men belonging to the Chiesa Libera here, and probably among the most advanced in point of opinion of Italian Protestants.

At PIETRA MARAZZI, in Piedmont, near Alessandria, there are in summer regular open air services attended by 300 and 400 persons of the Chiesa Waldese.

PIGNEROL. A small Waldensian church, and a school with 20 pupils.

The VAL D'AOSTA has three small Waldensian churches at *Montestrutto*, *Aosta*, and *Courmayeur*.

TURIN. The largest Waldensian congregation, with a handsome church, and two ministers engaged in making proselytes. It has four elementary schools, containing 200 pupils, a Sunday school, and an evening school. A second church will shortly be opened. There is also in Turin a Chiesa Libera, with about 60 communicants.

MILAN. The Chiese Libere boast of nearly 800 communicants, and the Waldese and Wesleyans of about 300 more. There are altogether six Protestant places of worship open in the town.

At COMO, the Waldensian place of worship for 120 persons, is found to be too small, and the services are repeated. At *Argegno*, and along the valley of *Intelvi*, there are small societies of Protestants, to whom the Waldese send a missionary.

PAVIA, a small Waldensian church.

BOLOGNA, a Chiesa Libera, with about 140 members.

BRESCIA, a small Waldensian congregation.

At ALESSANDRIA, PARMA, PONTEDERA, and ANCONA, there are also small Chiese Libere, and a few Protestants, (Waldese and others) are scattered at ASTI, ARCOLA, CREMONA, MODENA, SPEZZIA, TREVIGLIO, MONZA, and BERGAMO. At PALERMO there is a congregation of 50 Waldese.*

The organs of the various Protestant churches are :—

1. The *Eco della Verità,* published at Florence, under Waldensian influence. This is a very respectable controversial paper of a popular character, its tone good, and the ability of some of the articles very fair. It has not long been established, and at present has a circulation of 750 copies.

2. The *Coscienza,* at Naples, the organ of Mezzacannone; a paper of no great merit.

3. The *Civiltà Evangelica,* a new journal just started at Naples.

* The Vaudois, out of a total population of 22,000, furnish forty-five missionaries for the conversion of the 22,500,000 Italians. Of these missionaries, eighteen are ministers. The finances of the Church, January 1st, 1864, showed a deficit of 12,000 francs, and engagements for the ensuing quarter of 18,000 more. There seemed, however, to be a reliance upon friendly aid. The figures given above all refer to the beginning of the current year.

4. The *Balziglia*, a small paper, written half in French and half in Italian, current in the Waldensian valleys.

5. The *Scuola della Domenica*, a paper for children, published at Florence, selling 2,500 copies, and containing small moral tales, such as one in which the familiar "Don't care" of our childhood receives a *couleur locale* by being carried away by brigands,—and similar stories.

6. The *Letture di Famiglia* is a moral and literary periodical, supported by the Evangelicals, and bearing very fair comparison with our *Leisure Hour*. It is printed at Florence, and sells 500 copies.

For the information of the English public, accounts of Italian Protestantism are published in the *News of the Churches* (Edinburgh); and *A Voice from Italy*, a sheet privately distributed among those interested in the cause.

There are also accounts of the progress made in *Evangelical Christendom*, but it is said that they are exceedingly *couleur de rose*.

The expenses of the various churches in Italy, and the salaries of their ministers, are but very partially defrayed by the respective congrega-

tions. Two Committees of English and Scotch clergymen, residing at Nice and Geneva, distribute the large contributions of British evangelicals, and exercise, of course, proportionate authority in nominating and appointing the ministers. The Chiesa Waldese is principally indebted to the Free Kirk of Scotland, and the Chiesa Libera to English clergymen.

On the whole, excluding the inhabitants of the Waldensian valleys and foreigners resident in Italy, we may calculate the existing Italian Protestants of all denominations at somewhat under, or about 2,000—certainly not 3,000—inclusive of children and persons who attend the services without becoming regular members. These have been nearly all added since 1848, and mostly in the last year. Proportionately to the population of Italy, they are, of course, but a drop in the ocean, or one in ten thousand, and their social condition is of the lowest. With the exception of half a dozen men of station, they consist of artisans, or the poorer class of shopkeepers. Very few students or men of any education have joined them. The universal feeling that it is *bad taste* to change religion (quite as bad for a

Protestant to become a Catholic as *vice versâ*) no doubt serves more effectually as a barrier than any argument on the Romish side.

Actual persecution, or loss of employment, the Protestants do not complain of often; but when driven to take refuge in the hospitals, they are cruelly neglected by the attendant nuns on their refusal of the offices of the priest. Their friends, accordingly, make many efforts to succour them by private charity; and in Florence have established accommodation for them, besides claiming a separate ward in the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. Probably, in a very short time, we shall be enabled to form a better judgment than now of the success of the whole experiment; which, at all events, is one of profound religious interest.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### ITALIAN MANUFACTURE.

IN Renan's *Essais de Morale*, there is one on the "Poésie de l'Exposition," in which he clearly proved that the said Exposition had no poetry at all. The perfection of manufacture is the annihilation of Art. As we advance in the comfortable we retrograde from the sublime and beautiful. There is an inevitable inversion of ratio between convenience and grandeur. In other words, paths are more romantic than roads, and roads than railways. Galleys were more picturesque than ships, and ships than steam-boats. The oxen and the sickle, the distaff and the spindle, more artistic compared to the steam-plough, the reaping machine, the cotton loom, and the spinning-jenny. Naked savages and men in armour, were better than gentlemen dressed in coats, trousers, and chimney-pot hats. Houses

with windows admitting no light through their dim lattices, and fire-places emitting unlimited smoke through their cavernous mouths, were more beautiful than abodes with plate-glass and polished steel grates. And so on, and so on. Woe to æsthetic humanity! Great Pan is dead; Baldur has departed. We grow uglier and uglier *in secula seculorum*. "What we have seen" of beauty "our sons" will *not* "see". The "things which have been," were better than anything which will be again. International Exhibitions are the apotheoses of universal dereliction and decadence. What avails Steam when we have lost Perpendicular Architecture, or Photography and Telegraphs and Chloroform when we have no Raphaels, or Phidiases, or Michael Angelos? Better go two miles an hour with a sense of dignity on a palfrey, than forty in the vulgar flurry of a railway. Better live portraitless and newsless, and die outright when your time comes for it, rather than fill albums with *cartes de visites*, and read penny daily papers, and owe your salvation to a drug to which no one classical or mediæval association can be attached.

All this has been said over and over again, and we need not discuss it any more. Whether there be indeed any such change from the Beautiful and Picturesque to the Ugly and the Mean, between the past and the present, is not our concern. Very probably a considerable share of such apparent declension lies in the same natural law of human feelings whereby everything else, as well as beauty, is exalted when passed away, and contemned while still existing. We have only in our generation ceased to believe that men were taller in old times than now—forced reluctantly to come to such a conclusion from measuring their mummies and skeletons. We hardly believe, like the Hebrews, that they lived for several centuries, or like the Greeks, that they were able to lift stones, such as

> ——"Scarce ten men could raise,
> Such men as live in these degenerate days."

The "degenerate days" being those of Homer. Even yet we are not persuaded that summers were not warmer and fruit richer in the last generation than our own. In a word, we are only beginning to understand that the phrase, "The Good Old Times," merely means "All-

times when old are good," in respect of material things, stature, longevity, prosperity, climate, and the like. By and bye, possibly, we may discover that the same feeling which has made men in all time thus exaggerate the material, has made them also exaggerate the æsthetic merit of the Past. Admitting, as we must all do, that greater artists, greater ages of Art, properly so-called, have existed than now exist; it by no means follows, as M. Renan and his many echoes would seem to say, that all ancient and mediæval things—houses, furniture, dress, and other matters not of proper Art, should have been more beautiful than those of our own time. We regard them, indeed (such relics of them rather as remain to us, and which we may conclude, since they *have* remained, were the best of their kind) with much tenderness and a little romance. We do not attach to them the vulgar associations of our own abodes and costumes and utensils. We see them on the contrary, with their colours all toned down and mellowed, their sharper forms smoothed away, and all which reminds us of the mean incidents of our domestic life removed or faded.

Nay, more. The human soul assuredly sheds a light of beauty all its own, on whatsoever it can contemplate out of the glare of common day. The Distant, the Past, the Future, are always fair and noble. Little defects, little anxieties, poor and vain wishes, and struggles have no place in them. We do not see the vulgar details of the far off city, whose towers and domes stand against the western horizon. We do not recall in the pictures of our childhood the baby griefs and boyish pains which were perhaps at the time as real an obstacle to happiness as the grave cares of later life. We do not mingle in our dreams of future years any thoughts of such poor petty disappointments and *mesquin* pleasures as (unless our natures be transformed) will, beyond doubt, form features of our existence then, no less than now. In every case it is the same. The eye looking over space, or the mind glancing backward or forward over distant time, sees only Beauty. The soul throws out its own rays where the cold white light of common day is absent; and this *earthlight* it is which we see rounding into perfect form the dim and shadowy world we cannot otherwise discern. Here again,

as in the moral nature of man, are traces of the likeness of Him in whose image we are made. Each human soul loves and chooses Goodness when no disturbing passion intervenes. Each human mind beholds Beauty in all it contemplates outside of the petty interests of daily existence.

Surely there is here a clue to the beauty which we attach to many of the things which have come down to us from distant times? Of course it cannot explain in any way the real Art which pervades the Art-manufacture of the classic times of Greece and Rome, and the cinque-cento age of Italy. But it seems as if it did satisfactorily account for the otherwise mysterious halo of beauty and picturesqueness which hangs around the works of *all* ages except our own—the houses, the furniture, the utensils, the costumes which have for us a charm, simply because no vulgar associations attach to them, and the historical imagination invests them with that same self-reflected earthlight of beauty of which we have spoken. That old brick house overgrown with creepers, and with every line softened and broken, and every brick toned down by lichens, was probably as little picturesque or suggestive

to its first beholders, as the modern white villa with green blinds and trim gardens beside it, is to us. Cromwell's plated armour was perhaps sneered at by the archæologists of that day for its declension from the grandeur of the chain-mail of Cœur de Lion, as much as our dresses are scorned for their inferiority to doublets and trunk-hosen. How vulgar must wheel carriages have seemed to those accustomed only to horsemen on chargers and dames on ambling palfreys with hawk on wrist? The contempt lavished on our fire-horse the steam-engine by the antiquarian mind, has probably attached consecutively to every improved mode of human conveyance. Yet assuredly that mighty, roaring Iron Beast which we have created to do us obedient service, with the strength of a score of elephants together, has in it somewhat of the true sublime, such as no clumsy war-chariot of old, with scythes in its wheels, jolting cart-like over the roadless plains of the East, could ever have possessed? Turner's picture of "Wind, Rain, and Steam," is surely as suggestive of *power* (the great element of the Sublime) as any bas-relief of Roman Biga to be found in ancient art?

However all this may be decided, there is certainly one matter in which Renan is right. The perfection and *finnikinness* of modern English luxury has a real and curious antagonism to beauty. It is not only because they are new and fresh, and associated with common-place every-day ideas, nor only because they lack the soft glory of the Past, that our present houses and their contents are so little exciting to the æsthetic emotions. There is another cause for the phenomenon—a phenomenon which marks, be it noticed, our handsomest and most costly modern English homes, even more than those of less pretension. What is the reason that in a fine new London house, where the proportions of the rooms are all good, the colouring correct, each article of furniture or ornament individually unobjectionable—a house where from cellar to garret everything is perfect and complete—what is the reason, we ask, why such a house, instead of impressing us with the *high* pleasure of the gratification of our sense of the Beautiful, only impresses us with the far *lower* pleasure of the gratification of our sense of the Luxurious, or, at the most, of the Elegant and the Costly? Surely

the fact must be accounted for thus. Such a house, by the very perfection of its appliances for Comfort, suggests at every moment that very idea of Comfort which is so distant from the idea of the Beautiful. We cannot be so ungrateful as to forget our comfort one moment where it is provided for with such infinite care. Little wants and their little supplies are perpetually in question. The noiseless doors, so admirably hung and locked; the carpets, which leave audible no tread and give the foot pleasure to touch them; the silken, or fresh chintz, lounging chairs and sofas, and divans and ottomans, of every imaginable form, to give repose to every limb and accommodate every whim of posture; the resplendent grates with all their contrivances; the screens and candles and curtains, and well fitted windows and blinds and shades; the tables of a dozen sorts, loaded with every conceivable knick-knack, for writing, work, drawing, reading, or playing idle games—all these things, and all the corresponding arrangements of dining-room, bedrooms, and library, are each and all suggestions of possible wants and reminders of care taken to obviate them. What is this for—

and this and this? Lest you should be cold; lest you should be hot; lest you should need to summon a servant; lest you should hear noisy steps; lest there might be a draught; lest your legs or your arms, or your back or your head should desire rest; lest you should want more light; lest you should want less light; lest you should want air; lest you should need to hold up a book; lest you should want to write a letter, or wipe your pen, or light your taper, or hold your papers, or cut open leaves; lest, in a word, you should by any chance want to do anything and not find your wish forestalled. Sometimes it is much worse than this, and exhibitions of brown holland and yellow gauze and anti-macassars on all sides, say to you, "Lest your shoes should dust the carpet; lest the gilding be tarnished; lest your hair soil the back of the chair; lest, in fact, you (for whom all these luxuries are humbly designed) should after all take the liberty of using them too roughly."

Of course this is a second idea, meaner than the first, inasmuch as the care for furniture is even less an æsthetic emotion than the care for human comfort and ease. But either is sufficient

to banish the sentiment of the Beautiful so far off, that not all the well-toned papers and cleverly-designed chairs and tables out of the best upholstery warehouse, will bring it back again. A really fine picture or statue in such a house, instead of seeming in a fitting shrine of splendour, seems quite unaccountably out of place; and, if seen unexpectedly, is capable almost of giving one a "turn"—like a "grace" at a Greenwich dinner.

We only get out of this net of small cords in England in country-houses, especially in those a few generations old, where the comforts are rarely so elaborated as in town, and are put out of prominence by the large nature all round us, visible through every window and open door. Trees and flowers were doubtless adapted for human wants, and to give pleasure to human hearts—but it was by ONE whose care for us is the grandest and sweetest thought the universe can supply. No fear *God's* provision for our desires and our joys will make the cedar less noble, or the rose less beautiful.

In the midst of woods and gardens, also, we may perhaps admit that much of the same detail

of minor comforts which renders a town house so essentially un-æsthetic, may be passed over without the same result. The contrast of elegance and luxury within, and nature without, has in it something picturesque. A mountain lodge, where the visitor passes abruptly from the wild moor—abode of the grouse and the hare —into a little oasis of softest turf, sheltered by laurels and pines, and dotted over with gorgeous rhododendrons and azalias, is full of delight. Even the trim little conservatory, and smoothly-rolled gravel walk round the cottage, are not prosaic here, but add to the piquant contrast with the rudeness of the uncultured mountain. In like manner, the luxurious drawing-room of an old country-house, with its rich colours and carved furniture, and abundance of books and pictures, and bronzes and china, affords a charming complement to the masses of wood and reaches of open park in which it is situated. The reverse impression is given to that of almost similar accessories in a town mansion, where the noisy street, with its clattering vehicles, its pavement and stiff rows of brick and stucco houses, is as artificial as the furniture within.

An English country house alone may be luxurious —(and, oh! how much *more* luxurious in its silence and sweetness than the most magnificent palace in the roaring, evil-odoured town!)— without losing claim to be beautiful. We can feel, in such old family abodes, actual æsthetic pleasure, debarred us elsewhere in our comfort-ridden England, and our senses, soothed by rich colours and stately forms, and perfumes of flowers and sounds of rustling trees and cawing rooks, leave us ready for the tender and noble associations of an ancestral home.

But all these things are different in Italy. Neither in town palazzo or country villa is there any kind of danger that the superabundant provisions for convenience or comfort should obtrude themselves on us to the detriment of our sense of the beautiful. Quite the contrary. There is such an absence of all the details to which we have been accustomed from childhood, that on our first installation in an Italian room, we look around with blank amazement, and marvel how its proper office of drawing-room, bed-room, or dining-room, is to be carried on with such few objects as we behold—the half of

them, at least, also, being purely ornamental, and of no service at all. I have myself used for months a dressing-room in which an excellent copy of Canova's Graces afforded a substitute for a washing-stand, and charming frescoes of Centaurs made up for the lack of a looking-glass. A handsome Italian drawing-room will usually contain sundry works of real art, and some carved chairs and tables on which the eye will rest with infinite satisfaction, but as to the thousand minute contrivances for supplying our small wants and inclinations, the chances are there are none at all. Instead of an inkstand or a taper, there is probably an antique tazza; and, in default of a bell-handle beside the fireplace, a neat image of the Madonna. The soul may revel in the beautiful without any kind of disturbance from the comfortable. After a time we grow accustomed to the absence of all our thousand and one little luxuries. We ask ourselves were they really needful, or even convenient, and not rather encumbrances and nuisances. The necessity of making shift without them somehow gradually becomes pleasant. Life seems a sort of perpetual pic-nic—a pic-nic of the kind, with

champagne and music, be it remembered, not with sandwiches and bottled stout. It is half way between England and the glorious Eastern life of tents. The æsthetic sense has fullest sway, and the same picture or statue which seemed so incongruous in the "earthly paradise of ormolu" in Belgrave-square, seems here precisely in its right place. We are in the true land of the Beautiful.

These observations lead, however, to a feature of Italian affairs which, descending from the regions of æsthetics to those of common life, is rather more curious than admirable. The manufacturers of modern Italy, with a few well-marked exceptions, are purely ridiculous—feeble and *stupid* in an amazing degree. This is a side of Italian life of which Englishmen who do not travel have rarely a conception. They hear from childhood, over and over again, that Italy is the land of Art, and they picture to themselves, not without justice, infinite beauties of painting and sculpture, lavished throughout the land. Those who have paid any attention to antiquities, are also well aware that among the disinterred treasures from Pompeii, in the Museo Borbonico,

is the most amazing collection of bronze utensils for household use, each of which is a model of elegance and delicacy. The vases, drinking vessels, water pots, dishes, and even the kitchen scales and cleavers, are beautiful—rich and fanciful in design, and perfect in workmanship. But the manufactures of modern Italy are very different from these. The arts, which the ancients knew so well, have assuredly not been cultivated by their descendants. In the very palaces, whose walls are hung with Titians and Raphaels, and whose marble floors and frescoed ceilings suggest magnificence, unknown in England, the commonest matters of daily convenience are so clumsy and awkward as to be perfectly absurd. The carpenter's work, upholstery, iron and brass foundry, and pottery, are all the same. Everything is ill-designed for its purpose, and ill-made even on its bad design. We need not look at the houses of the poorer classes, or of remote country places; but only at palazzi and villas, in and around the great cities, to see this helpless sort of manufacture; in fact, except when imported from England, France, or Germany, there is no such thing in Italy as a really well-made bit of

iron, steel, glass, or china, not to speak of ordinary woven fabrics. There are plenty of marble carvings, and exquisite gold ornaments, and pretty Roman scarfs, and Tuscan straw plaitings and fine lace, and a really delicious luxuriance of fanciful and tasteful frescoes, lavished over every wall and ceiling, and putting for ever to shame our mechanical wall-papers and ugly roofs. But, beyond these, there is really hardly anything good of Italian manufacture. There is, in the first place, no attempt to make any object accurately. The rooms have no pretensions to being built at right angles, but invariably form rhomboids of more or less exaggeration. I do not believe there is a well-squared apartment in all Lombardy or Tuscany. The largest hall almost in the world, at Ferrara, has three walls at right angles, and the fourth about twenty feet askew. It is the same with smaller objects, no table or chest is squared; and if a box have a lid, which fits in one way (which would already be remarkable), it is sure that by no means may it be allowed to reverse the angles. As to iron and steel utensils, a pair of tongs which does not on all occasions cross its legs, a poker which does not bend, a

chisel, saw, plane, or corkscrew which does not entirely fail to perform its office, would be a marvel. The very hammers are miracles of clumsiness and disproportion. Pins are still made in Rome, under a Papal monopoly a century old, with head and shank in one, all formed of weak, bending wire. As to scissors or knives, nobody dreams of using them who can afford the poorest refuse of English cutlery; and the nails, screws, and horse-shoes, are as bad as bad can be. Glass bottles for wine and oil are of such poor blown glass as to require always to be cased in wicker work. Brushes of all kinds are brought from France, though Italian tortoiseshell combs are as good as the rest of their shell and coral work.

Italian window sashes are invariably made of ill-fitting woodwork, painted at intervals too distant for easy calculation, and containing loosely fitted glass of a quality so bad that the portion of light they admit is about half what it ought to be. Of course, the process of opening or shutting such a window, is rarely accomplished without laborious struggles with hasps and bolts, and at every gust of wind of a stormy day it is customary to hear the doors fly open from their

imperfect locks, and a window or two violently banged and smashed, the wretched glass breaking at every jar. Such a window as this, with panes about a foot square, is to be seen forming one side of the famous ball-room in the Colonna Palace in Rome, probably the grandest apartment in Europe, with its costly marbles and bronzes and splendid pictures. In St. Peter's, also, over the great door, there is a row of such mean little windows of common glass, and in the shops in all the great towns and the best private houses. Then for the doors. This highly gifted nation has devised a plan of placing the handles of every chamber door so near the post that it is impossible to open and shut it without catching the fingers and pinching them severely in the attempt. Needless to say that the thin and paltry panelling excludes no noise, even of a whisper, from the adjoining apartment, and that there are generally spaces above, below, all round, and through the key-hole, for infinite draughts to pass with every facility.

Chairs and tables in Italy very rarely have castors; a large *poltrone* or arm-chair is consequently pretty well a fixture when the stone

floors are covered, as is usual during half the year, either by a double carpet or (in less well-furnished houses) by a carpet fastened down over a bed of hay. Sofas are huge unwieldy things, with broad plain feet, which it would take three men at least to shove out of their places. The forms of these articles of furniture are often good and artistic enough, but the manufacture abominable. What many of them can be stuffed with, unless it be brickbats, to produce such a condition of induration, has always been a mystery to me. Looking-glasses, again, as articles of utility, not of ornament, are matters of constant *exercise*, as a Quaker would say, to any unfortunate lady who may chance to be possessed by a curiosity to look at the results of her toilette. As to seeing her "*natural* face in a glass," it is what she need indulge in no hopes of doing. Probably she will find her countenance extended laterally in an ellipse, one eye and cheek being much larger than another, so as to give her somewhat the shape of a map of Africa, while her colour will probably vary between drab and a delicate green. Even the pleasure which such a glimpse of what Mrs. Gatty calls the "Human Face Divine"

(especially when it is one's own face) can be obtained only at intervals. Italian mirrors, mounted on huge frames, and often supported by columns which an infant Sampson might exercise himself in pulling down, are yet invariably afflicted by a looseness of the joints, for which neither cod-liver oil nor any other remedy can be recommended. At that aggravating crisis, with which most of my female readers must be experimentally familiar, when dinner is announced, and the hair is still over the shoulders, not to speak of the dress still unchanged—at that peculiar moment your Italian looking-glass always swings back, with a slow motion, presenting you for a moment with a vanishing view of your chin, and then remaining delicately balanced horizontally, so as to afford all the advantage of its services to the flies on the ceiling. Of course, you push it back to a perpendicular position, and make a furtive effort to adjust the bit of paper, or perhaps hair-pin, which you perceive some previous sufferer has stuck as a wedge or screw to tighten the joint. The result is that this time the glass flaps forward, your forehead appears for an instant in the foreground, and then the mirror remains

stationary, face downward. At such moments, also, it is somewhat trying to hear a groan from your maid, who has rushed to the great clumsy chest of drawers in search of some indispensable garment; and, as such drawers have never any handles except the key, and the keys are as bad as all other manufactures in Italy, she finds that the process of pulling out a heavy and, of course, ill-fitted drawer by a small bit of iron has only ended in breaking the key and leaving the drawer a fixture. You turn for consolation to the washing-stand, and there indeed there is comfort; for, be the house or hotel you occupy generally well or ill furnished, you are equally sure to find English jugs and basins, and English watercrofts and tumblers. But should you need a fair supply of water for your travelling bath, the vessel in which it has been left is—classic, no doubt—but about six stone weight, and requiring to be held topsy-turvy to let a single drop escape; in fact, apparently constructed on the principle of those ink-bottles, warranted not to spill their contents under any contingency.

The crockery of Italy in the nineteenth century is more rude, ill-coloured, and senseless in form,

than can be dug out of any barbarian barrow or Nile mud twelve thousand years deposited. Rough daubs of green and yellow paint cover a surface of the coarsest and worst baked clay. When they sometimes attempt a little ornament, —as for the *scaldini* for carrying about hot charcoal in winter,—it is absolutely ludicrous in its rudeness and ugliness. Even the common plates, and cups and saucers, all come from England; and our familiar patterns reappear everywhere, unless where, in some instances, the French white porcelain, half an inch thick, has taken its place. Well can I recall the shock which the discovery of this fact gave me, when I had been fancying everything new and marvellous in Italy, the land of Art,—and, behold! the vulgar old platters of England were still haunting me, with those trees, such as Eden never knew, that blue gondola on the white sea, the two gigantic doves in the sky, and the three little men, not a hundredth part so big, going over the bridge in the foreground below. Being still rather young, and altogether foolish, at the time, I composed the following Elegiac Stanzas, precisely in the time and locality they indicate.

Last night I stood in Eternal Rome;
I gazed on the midnight sky,
And I noted how Orion blazed
Aloft on the zenith high.

"Even the stars," I said, "are changed,
All things are changed for me;
My old bright life, like the Northern Wain,
Has gone down into the sea.

In this new year, what other stars
May rise I cannot know:
How well I know how the calm old woods
Sleep in the moonlight now!"

To-day I walked on the wild rough grass
Of the drear Campagna wide:
Then turned and sate me by the sea—
The sea which hath no tide.

"All things," again I said, "are changed,
Even this black sea-sand;
And never flowers or herbs like these
Grew on our English land.

The bright sands of my life have run;
Time's glass holds darker now:
The simple fragrant flowers of yore,
Round me no more shall grow."—

To-night I sate by a great wood-fire,
In Civita Vecchia here,
Waiting—not over patiently—
Till supper should appear.

It came at last—that sorry meal;
Vile coffee, viler meat!—
But these were nought; mine eyes were fixed
At once upon the plate!

The stars may change! Great Algebar
  May down to Nadir roll,—
The Bear may swish his mighty tail
  Against the Northern Pole,

Flowers, grass, and trees may be transform'd;
  December glow like June;
Earth's golden shores turn ashes black;
  The tides forsake the moon;—

But never—never change shall reach
  One thing in mortal state:
One only thing—I see it now—
  A WILLOW-PATTERN PLATE!

## CHAPTER XVII.

### PEOPLE ONE MEETS IN ITALY.

IF I were asked which was the greatest pleasure incident to a residence in Italy, I should not say it was either beholding classic memorials and treading historic soil, nor yet admiring the glories of Italian Art. Nay, nor even revelling in the supreme loveliness of Italian Nature. To my thinking, the Social Life of Italy offers greater enjoyments than any of these. I am not speaking of the society of Italians themselves. Into the actual native circles a foreigner rarely enters, and, when he does so, seems to find few topics of common interest. Still less do I mean the fashionable coteries of Rome—where Belgravia is transported with all its inanities into the Piazza di Spagna. With the special delights of these circles I have no concern. But there are other people in Italy beside Italian nobles or

Italian *Mezzo-ceto*, and British "*grand monde*." There are in Italy, more than anywhere else in the world, a multitude of men and women more or less gifted, who lead *real* lives—lives which they have carved out for themselves and have not merely fitted into—lives which have a definite aim, and that aim a high one. There are *littérateurs* high and low, from great poets and scholars down to newspaper correspondents. There are sculptors, painters, cameo-cutters, singers, musicians, actors. There are also many men and women having independent means living in Italy in perpetual study, some of classic or Etruscan archæology, some of Cinque Cento *bric-à-brac*, some of the priceless treasures of books in the Vatican and Laurentian libraries, some of the galleries, some of the Churches. Many more there are who are poor—so poor that in England they would need to live in perpetual self-denial and sordid economy; but who have had the courage to break away from the fetters of custom and find themselves enabled in Italy to enjoy nearly all the pleasures and *quite* all the honour and independence conveyed by wealth in England. Some few of these literary and ar-

tistic, studious or economical people are French; many more German; still greater number English and American. Especially does Italy seem the favourite land of gifted Americans, both men and women, and never perhaps is the American character seen to greater advantage. American women, in particular, seem to find it a congenial sphere for the development of the more marked individuality which characterises them. Italy has another advantage. It has not only more interesting people than almost or perhaps altogether any other country. It has also fewer bores. As we recede from the shores of our beloved Britain and get further from Boulogne and Paris and Brussels and the Rhine, we leave behind us more of that class of tourists whose society cannot be said to convey any very brilliant gratification. In Switzerland there are to be met many specimens of the genus Paterfamilias, pompous and slow; Materfamilias, fussy and foolish; young ladies with empty faces, and young gentlemen with empty heads—an atmosphere of execrable French pervading the whole. But once over the Alps, the genus "Tourist," with its proper female accompaniment, becomes

rare. A few, of course, are to be found. I have even discovered rare specimens so far south as Cairo and east as the Jordan; in fact, it would be hard to say if there be a spot of earth unvisited by this order of Mammalia. But (as I have said) removing from its proper *habitat*, Boulogne (pronounced Boolon), the specimens dwindle perceptibly, till in Italy they form an inconsiderable proportion of the zoological curiosities at *tables d'hôtes*. Italy is far off, and in Italy people speak something even more incomprehensible than "Boolon" French; and Italy is not to be "done" in a month's holiday, and so blessed Italy escapes pretty well from one tribe of Gothic invaders at all events.

Perhaps, in sober seriousness, it is not well to rejoice that so it should be. How is it that people *become* stupid, and vulgar, and conceited about themselves and their money? It is, surely, for want of that higher education which is not to be had in boarding-schools, but in association with large and cultivated minds—from seeing the world's beauty and the world's wonder—from having Mrs. Grundy snuffed out in grander interests. Then, for the sake of our race, we ought

rather to desire that all such ennobling influences be opened as widely as possible to those classes who most need them. Perhaps, if we were to pause and consider, there are few things much more sad than the position of a young man, or still more, a young woman, who possesses many natural aspirations for better things, but whose whole horizon is blocked up with the vulgar vanities of worldly-minded parents. Take the girl, for instance, educated in that vile way which the Ladies' Colleges have not yet shamed out of practice; taught to *seem* everything, and to *be* nothing—trained thoroughly to no one art or branch of knowledge, or even to the right way of studying anything whatever—only to make sham music, sham drawing, to talk sham French and Italian, and to have glimpses of such superficial History and Literature, as may obviate the chances of exposure of too gross ignorance. After a youth spent in these inane pursuits, with no one preparation of heart or head to take life by the right handle, the young woman finds herself walled in by a circle of narrow-minded relatives—perhaps, a vulgar mother intent on pushing into "society"—perhaps, a coarse despotic father,

and brothers and sisters brought up under the same influences. The friends which such a girl is likely to meet are only those who reflect the miserable vanities and follies of the rest. No allusions to nobler aims of existence—no large and generous sympathies, perhaps, reach her from one year's end to another—no honest and real enjoyment of books or nature. If, by any chance, some great work, or the words of some higher mind, rouses the young soul for a moment with some pure enthusiasm, it dies down ere long in the atmosphere of worldliness. A weakly tree, growing in a crowded wood, has as much chance of becoming strong and beautiful, and stretching its boughs outward, and rearing its head upward in the pure air, as a young girl, under such conditions, has a chance of becoming a morally healthy and happy woman. To *transplant* such an one into another field is the only remedy. We should feel something almost like pity for the sickly tree without its share of soil or sunshine. Should we only shrink, as from a vulgar bore, from the woman who has reached middle life without a chance of emerging from the rank shades, or breathing a better and purer air? A

young man who has any spark of nobleness in him, may fight his way out of his original surroundings—may "grapple with his evil star, and grasp the skirts of happy chance." But to a young woman, ungifted with rarest energy and self-reliance, such a thing is almost impossible. A son is responsible for being narrow as a narrow-minded father. But a daughter is only to be pitied for being vulgar and worldly, as a vulgar and worldly mother. The old Lycians, who, Herodotus tells us, reckoned a man's pedigree only in the female line through his mothers and grandmothers, and counted him noble or servile as they were of one class or another, would have been quite right had they so estimated only *woman's* genealogy. Nature and all social influences combine to enforce on a girl, save under rare circumstances, the same degree of elevation and refinement, or baseness and coarseness, which belonged to her mother. The one chance for her is to transplant her altogether into a different ground and a different atmosphere.

To return to the subject of my chapter. Here are a few of the people one meets in Italy. The door of my *salone*, in Machiavelli's old villa on

Bellosguardo, opens straight on the gravel walk through the *podère*,—the blended olive-yard, garden, and vineyard of Tuscany. Through this door enters a lady, with a warm word of recognition in French. She is no longer young, but seems careworn, and somewhat sad. Her grey hair is cut squarely on her high forehead. Her features are pale, and of the peculiar cast of the old French *noblesse*, with high nose and thin lips, and oval shape, all delicately chiselled. She wears a black dress, more like a Carmelite's than an artist's; yet something in the charm of her greeting speaks more of the woman of the world than of either nun or sculpturess. And so it is; for Félicie de Fauveau is one-third artist, one-third *grande dame*, one-third *dévote—Catholique et royaliste au bout des doigts*. She may well be royalist, the high-hearted woman, if sacrifices for a cause endear it to us. Five members of her family perished on the scaffold in the old Revolution, and the whole of their estate was confiscated. She herself, in her youth, beautiful and gifted, quitted the gay world of Paris, where she was a special favourite, to follow the Duchesse de Berri as her *demoiselle d'honneur* through the Vendéan

war. Through the whole of that wild enterprise she accompanied her; was seized with her at the last; and then, when the hopes of the legitimists were utterly destroyed, was thrown by Louis Philippe into a miserable prison of lost women. Here she spent an entire year; as she has told me herself, enduring every sort of indignity and privation which the petty vindictiveness of the government could add to incarceration in such a place. For many months she was allowed no change of linen, and was purposely confounded, as much as possible, with the wretched criminals and fallen women in the jail. At last she was set at liberty, but ruined and penniless. The last shred of the large estates of her family were gone, and the royal house for whom they had been sacrificed was ruined likewise. On the talents which had hitherto served to amuse herself and friends must depend thenceforth her subsistence, and that of her mother. A younger brother joined them, and they went to Florence. At first, Mdlle. de Fauveau took to painting, and sold a few pictures, but after a time turned to modelling. "Sculpture," she said to me, "is an art always above one, always requiring more

knowledge, more skill, more physical labour than any other. Therefore, it is the only art for one whose life is over, to whom the world is all inane and dull. *Quand on a fait la guerre,* do you think it possible to be interested in little feminine gossip and amusements?" So she worked, sometimes at fanciful statues, more often at crucifixes and funeral monuments. There were many found to appreciate her labours, and she was enabled to support her mother in comparative affluence, and to enjoy, at the little grand-ducal court, and among the old noblesse of Florence, the society congenial to her taste and her prejudices. But misfortune followed her again. Her mother, the object of her whole heart's devotion, died, and was buried at Mount Oliveto; and every week Mdlle. de Fauveau walked thither to perform pious duties at her grave, while she worked in the intervals at a tomb, perhaps the most touching ever made—a mother's tomb wrought by a daughter's hands. It represents the noble old lady gently sleeping in that repose of age and weakness which is the next stage to the last repose of death. But, before the marble was complete, the great change had passed over Italy

which has brought new life and liberty to so many, but to the old royalists only loss and sorrow. Her friends at the Pitti fled from Florence; the whole face of affairs was changed; and there was no longer interest enough among her party to prevent what she has felt most bitterly of all—the establishment of a caserne of soldiers on Monte Oliveto, to the desecration of her mother's grave. The beautiful monument stands still in her own studio in the Via della Fornace, along with her carved wooden crucifix (so lifelike as to be terrible to look upon), with the statue of a guardian angel; the magnificent tomb ordered by Lord Lyndsay for his mausoleum in Scotland, and other works, nearly all sad and solemn. "I, who have made monuments for so many," she says, "I am not allowed to place one over my mother's grave. I am not even able to go and pray there, amid the crowd of staring soldiers—the soldiers of this new kingdom!"

But among her friends, even those of utterly different politics and religious faith, this heroine and devotee is full of gentle gaiety and wit. Among all the clever women in the world, I think there is hardly one whose conversation is so

brilliant. Sometimes it is full of anecdotes of her strangely varied life, but far oftener descriptions of passing scenes, drawn with all an artist's vigour, and enlivened by epigrams such as only a Frenchwoman could make. On the evening I last saw her, as she dined with another friend and myself, she gave us an account of the *Triduo*, on account of Renan, which she had that day attended in the Duomo of Florence,—the darkened cathedral, the catafalque with its few pale tapers alone visible in the gloom, the kneeling multitudes prostrate and mourning on the marble pavement, the few voices of the unseen choir, singing the dolorous *Miserere*. "Yes, he is a wretched creature that Renan! un petit vaurien, ramassé par charité. C'était Monseigneur Dupanloup qui lui a donné de l'argent pour son voyage en Syrie. Encore il ne sait pas un mot d'Hébreu." We laughed at the *Myths* circulated at the Triduo against the wonderful scholar and critic; but Mdlle. de Fauveau was not to be laughed out of them. Three or four of her sayings I shall not soon forget. Speaking of disappointment in friendship, she said: "All other griefs and disappointments have certain recognised consola-

tions, or at least duties, which survive them. But for the discovery that your friend is unworthy, there is no comfort, and nothing remains to be done. My confessor told me, that for this grief alone the Church had nothing to offer or to counsel." As to her political creed, she summed it up well one day when I urged that Bomba and Bombalino were as bad Kings as bad could be! Her reply was final: "Mademoiselle, le pire des rois vaut mieux que la meilleure des républiques!"

Take another of the people one meets in Italy, the author of the *Decade of Italian Women*, and *Filippo Strozzi*, and *Beppo the Conscript*, and many other admirable studies of Italian life and history. He has a beautiful *villino*, which he has built for himself in Florence, and filled with precious relics of *cinque-cento* art and furniture—a very museum of *bric-à-brac* and archæology. With him lives his wife (hardly less well known in the literary world) and his little fairy daughter, whose musical gifts are the wonder of Florentine society. She sings like nothing of ten years old in human shape—with such wondrous feeling and accuracy.

What a mystery it is, how children, and (apparently) very ordinary men and women, can render the infinite sadness or wild despair of composers like Schubert, or Chopin, or Beethoven, when they are themselves utterly ignorant of such feelings! Children who have never known a sorrow will seem to wail out some melody from the very depth of a breaking heart, and convey to the listener a whole world of grief, which it is impossible they should understand. Again, I have known grown men and women, in whom (at least in ordinary intercourse) it was impossible to discover any finer chords of feeling, who seemed to be made of most common clay, who yet at the instrument became prophets, giving to the world the awful joys and struggles and despair of some mighty soul with whom it would seem their own could be in no sort of relation. What is this *dramatic* power in human nature which enables the possessor to render what he cannot understand? How is it that the coarse actor can rehearse fine poetry, the irreligious painter (like Perugino) make pictures which shall warm the piety of thousands? There are but two theories possible. Either the artist has always latent in

him, a real *potential*, if not actual, grief, love, religion, or whatever other sentiment he may render; or else there exists in human nature an artificial faculty, enabling certain persons to simulate sentiments of whose real experience they are incapable, and (horrible to say) this artificial faculty is almost or quite indistinguishable from the genuine expression of passion, and often raises the possessor to a rank in art above that of the individual who actually feels all that he only makes believe to feel!

Here are more "People one meets in Italy." Cavaliere Massimo dei Marchesi d'Azeglio is probably, of living men, the one who has achieved success in the most varied lines. As a statesman, he paved the way for Cavour, and inaugurated the liberal policy of Italy. As a soldier, he distinguished himself in nearly all the battles of the last fifteen years in his country. As a painter, he has attained no small eminence. As a writer, he is reckoned universally by Italians the Walter Scott of their country. As a member of society, I can testify (after dining for many weeks in his company) that a more charming, witty, and instructive companion, is hardly to be

met with. In look and manner he is the high-bred old soldier, easy and frank and courteous to everybody; his tall figure is rather bent by some seventy years, but his face, with its broad forehead and mild grey eyes, retains many traces of former beauty. To hear such a man talk of past history or present politics, or of art and literature, is necessarily a great pleasure, yet I think few would be prepared, considering the common-places to which even clever Italians are fond of limiting their subjects, for the bold and original conversation of M. d'Azeglio. Of course, it is impossible to reproduce on paper, after some months, the course of such table-talk, but a few of his observations remain on my mind. Some officers and gentlemen in company were one day talking of "what Italy would do," "what the Emperor would do"—in certain contingencies. "Ah," said M. d'Azeglio gravely, "we speak of kings and statesmen having saved Italy, and intending to do this and that, but it is God who is guiding it all, we know not how." Such an expression of religious faith—simple as it would have sounded from an Englishman—seemed from an Italian equally strange and memor-

able. Another day there was a discussion of Dutch art and of such books as *Vanity Fair*. "Some people," said he, "seek only for truth, and that is all right; but why should they think there is *nothing true except ugliness?* (qu'il n'y a rien de vrai que le laid?") Again, another time an allusion was made to the belief in miracles as a thing of the past. The old *statesman* gave a very characteristic definition of them. "Les miracles? ah! je n'en crois rien. Ce sont *des coups d'état célestes!*" Perhaps at this moment, when so many are seeking for new theories and explanations of them, this view, that they are celestial "*coups d'état*" may not be uninstructive!

Strange to say, M. d'Azeglio had never heard of a woman great in her way, as he in his, and whose whole heart was given to the course of which he was one of the leaders. Elizabeth Barrett Browning has been constantly supposed to be an American, though she never visited America, and had no other connexion with the country than that which the passionate admiration for her writings felt by so many Americans, caused them to establish by continual intercourse. Her house, indeed, "Casa Guidi" at the corner

of via Maggio in Florence, became a place of pilgrimage during her life, and since her death bears a great marble tablet erected by the municipality of Florence, testifying to her residence. The large upstairs room, hung with tapestry, where she received her guests, was dear to many hearts. Even those who, like myself, had but slight acquaintance with her, could hardly help catching the enthusiasm of affection she inspired in those who knew her best. She was right to say in *Aurora Leigh* that women loved each other's mental gifts, for assuredly none ever received warmer devotion than she did from her friends.

When I knew her she was no longer young, and much worn by incessant ill-health. She was small and slight in figure, and wore long black ringlets which concealed much of her face. I had travelled from Venice to Florence mainly to avail myself of an introduction to the woman who could write *Aurora Leigh*, and the first feeling at seeing her was one rather of surprise. There was no look of power,—only of fragility and delicacy. But hardly were a few words spoken before one saw in her that unerring

mark of a great woman, an eye calm and deep, looking through and through the person she addressed. In her mode of speaking also was that same calm strength which, once felt, could never be forgotten. I should say that in a drawing-room full of company, Mrs. Browning would have been about the last person to have fixed on as the authoress of those most "muscular" poems, or, indeed, almost the last person one would have addressed with the idea of finding a gifted or original woman at all. But to have met her eyes and spoken to her for five minutes, was quite sufficient to prove, that out of a thousand, *she* was the writer of *Aurora Leigh*. What her genius might have accomplished had it pleased God to spare her life, and had that life been an ordinarily healthy one, can only be guessed by considering what she accomplished under conditions of suffering and weakness which make of ninety-nine out of a hundred women mere valetudinarians—patient, perhaps, but wholly engrossed by their own sickness and trouble.

From her girlhood Mrs. Browning was always as it were hovering between life and death, and only her husband's devoted care and the warm

climate to which he brought her, retained her so long in the world. Always weak, constantly ailing, shut up for all the winter months in her apartment, and, at the best, only seeing so much of things as may be beheld from a carriage or in few and rare visits, this marvellous woman contrived to amass stores of classic learning, such as, perhaps, hardly any other of her sex ever possessed, and to write books wherein all the social problems of our time are handled with amazing force and vigour. In her political poems, whatever may be thought of their merits, there breathes unmistakably the fervour of the passionate love she gave to Italy, and the earnestness with which she was able, from her sick room, to throw her heart into the great struggle then carried on upon the fields of Magenta and Solferino. I have seen long letters from her, written almost daily to an intimate friend, all filled with political views and speculations, hardly ever making reference to herself or her own affairs, save when she avowed having shed tears of joy at some great victory. Few lives, perhaps, offer so much that is instructive and admirable, and enviable also, as that of this nobly gifted woman.

Her solid learning and patient culture of her art were the secrets which raised it so far above all the ordinary poetry of women. Her courage and energy, surpassing the passive patience common to her sex, enabled her to do more in a state of constant weakness and suffering, than almost any other woman in full health and vigour. And lastly, she was every way enviable in her great powers, not only of writing but of loving, and in receiving their natural reward of being beloved by many with enthusiastic affection, and in obtaining from her husband a devotion which has for ever broken the prejudice that Genius and Love cannot long combine together. That the marriages of so many gifted women have been singularly unfortunate may be traced to the simple fact—that the *masculine for their feminine* was not discovered, or perhaps, easily discoverable. Mrs. Browning found a man whose own powers were great enough and his heart large enough to appreciate and to glory in those she possessed. The result, as all the world knows, was one of the happiest unions which have blessed man and woman.

Robert Browning is, I suppose, among poets,

what Wagner is among musical composers. He is the Poet of the Future; not very harmonious, —in fact generally writing a series of unresolved discords, wonderfully wise and scientific and suggestive no doubt, but asking a vast amount of cultivation and study to be "understanded of the people." Reading his poems, one might "construct the idea" of him out of one's moral consciousness, as a very sombre personage with square jaw, fit for the mastication of hard words, —a propounder of dark enigmas, exceedingly disdainful of the comprehension thereof by the profane vulgar. A very kindly and social gentleman, with pleasant face and warmly cordial manners, addicted much to the telling of droll stories, would remove the illusion by displaying the real Robert Browning.

Here is a strange figure I once beheld, and always recall in my mind's Gallery of Italian Portraits. The scene is an old palazzo close over the Arno in Florence, with dead Templars buried beneath. On the first floor, some dark and dusty anterooms; then a large and lofty, but most dreary chamber all set round with half finished pictures, standing against the walls.

In the centre, a large, faded, old puppet-show. Two odd-looking, dreamy women are poring over back numbers of *Punch* in one corner. A little child, pretty and weird-like, floats to and fro through the sombre room and into an inner chamber where sits an old man with long white beard and glittering eye, the nearest approach to an ancient wizard that well might be conceived. There is a bookcase all filled with editions of Dante; another and a larger one containing several hundred volumes concerning Magic and the Black Art, from old black-letter vellum-bound tomes to the most recent pamphlets of the spirit-press of America. More pictures; some of dead and gone beauties painted fifty years ago by the old man himself; some collected in Florence, and among them an original contemporary portrait of Savonarola in his ghastly ugliness. Three old tables covered with disused colours and artists' materials, and all the *robaccio* of an Italian studio; a great carved chest once Machiavelli's, and still containing one of his manuscripts—everything dusty, dirty, worm-eaten. Underneath the grimy window the Arno rushing by. It was a dreary picture;

only a little bright canary flitted over the portraits and the chest, and perched on the old man's shoulder, and seemed like a ray of light in the room. Very deaf and feeble, our host greeted us kindly and with the courtesy of an English gentleman. By and bye, he began to talk of spirits, then to show sketches he had made in water-colours of the visions seen by himself and friends. One, I remember, represented a great grey veiled apparition rising out of the ground. Another was of a woman lately dead, a "Medium," who had been his friend, flying above the old man and guarding him with outstretched rainbow wings. I was saddened at the sight and turned to look at the library, where doubtless Paracelsus and Albertus Magnus and all their congeners of dreamers and impostors were to be found. My dress, however, was in a moment caught and pulled; the poor little child had thought she could make a play-fellow of me—doubtless much needed in that dreary home—so after Imogen I went, and chased her into the large anteroom, and looked at her puppet-show, and thought it was a wiser toy than spirit-rapping manuals.

Here is another old man—very old—with a grand massive head and white hair. He talks strangely, tells marvellous anecdotes of Byron's meanness and Shelley's goodness, and then abuses the world and ungrateful men in passionate and violent terms. He loves to have flowers given him, though his trembling hands cannot fix them as he desires in his coat, and he thanks me for doing it for him with old-world compliment, "You have placed them on my heart!" He has a beautiful Pomeranian dog always beside him, and "Giallo" almost justifies his name, for his hair is chestnut and gold—a most singular and attached animal, and, like all true Pomeranians, a dog of one idea—videlicet, his master. This old man,—more like King Lear than one could have supposed a nineteenth-century gentleman could be,—is (or rather was, three years ago) Walter Savage Landor. He is now, alas! poor old man, sinking quietly away in extremest age, with all careful tendance from his family.

Here is a very different picture. A young American lady, tall and beautiful, with magnificent hair and column-like throat. She has come to Italy to study singing and prepare herself for

the stage, and has given up all prospects in America from her devotion to her art. But suddenly an attack of cold destroys her voice. She is told by the physicians she must never sing again. Does she go about despairing and thinking her life over? Very much otherwise. She engages to write as Correspondent to several New York and Boston papers, informs herself diligently of all that is passing in Italy, goes to see whatever is to be seen of public festival or meeting, and supports both herself and her mother in comfort on the pay of some of the best letters ever sent to a newspaper. She is not alone; there are many other young women in Florence and Rome thus admirably working their way: some as writers, some as artists of one kind or another, bright, happy, free, and respected by all. One of them (Miss Foley, of Rome) has selected the profession of a cameo-cutter, so peculiarly fitted for a woman's work, and turns out of her studio admirable likenesses.

The artist world of Italy is, however, a whole world of itself. Here is Hiram Powers of Florence—the sculptor of the Greek Slave—a tall, old man, with a brown eye, so like an eagle's, I

suppose no one has ever seen him for the first time without thinking of the bird. A realist in art is Mr. Powers, holding deliberately the theory that the artist's duty is only to copy nature exactly. I asked him once, did not he hold that a sculptor or painter should do more than represent his subject at a certain moment and in a certain mood? Ought he not to make such a statue or such a picture as should give us the man, not only ordering his troops or speaking his oration, at twelve o'clock on Monday or six o'clock on Tuesday, at such a battle or in such a meeting—but the man as he was, in his study, in his garden, on the hunting field, any day and every day, with all the possibilities of love, hatred, resolution, humour or anger that in him might be? Mr. Powers' reply was "No! Ask any artist who talks of doing such a thing to make you first a real picture or statue of the man exactly as he was at a given time and place; and when he has done *that*, let him try his ideal portrait. Depend upon it, people only talk of the ideal when they cannot accomplish the real." "But, then, Art is no better than photography?" "Suppose," (said he) "you heard that two sta-

tues of Homer had been discovered in Greece. One should represent him exactly as he may have been, the beggar in rags, with every squalid circumstance about him; the other, idealising him as the majestic poet of the Iliad, with all the grandeur Phidias could have bestowed—which of those statues would you have most cared to see?"

"Assuming that Homer *was* ever a beggar in rags,—

"The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle"—

of course, the statue representing him as such, would be the most interesting."

"And if one of the two statues only could be preserved, which would you decide should be saved?"

"Still the realist one."

"Then, to make such statues is the proper aim of the artist."

"It does not seem so to me, unless the aim of art be only to satisfy curiosity. We should prefer the realist statue of Homer, not from æsthetic, but historical interest. A photograph and cast of his skull would be better than such a statue for our purpose. Surely art aims at more than these?"

Of course, Mr. Powers held his opinion, and afterwards made the interesting remark that he

did not consider what we are accustomed to call Greek faces as peculiar, or even perhaps much more common among the Greeks than among ourselves. He thought them the expression of a perfectly balanced nature, all the faculties and powers being well developed and in due relation. Thus, in our day, in any country in the world, a man thus perfectly constituted is likely to have the Greek type of head and feature. The old Greeks doubtless knew this, and in making ideal statues always adopted the type we call by their name. I mentioned that at Athens I had noticed the form of face to be still predominant, and asked him if he did not think it betokened a "balance" which was somewhat of a *stable equilibrium?* These beautiful Greek heads, with straight foreheads, straight noses, small mouths, and well-cut chins, with much size on the top of the head and very little at the back, seem always to belong to men and women who were, like the old Greeks, calm and self-sustained, who fulfil their own ideal, and do not make life a struggle to mend themselves and the world. It is easy to fancy a Greek-faced man a Ruler, a Poet, a Philosopher—Pericles, Sophocles, Plato.

We cannot easily fancy him a Reformer, a Martyr —Luther or Savonarola. If we take a Greek bust, and imagine that some *modern* Pygmalion could endue it with life, we should find in it a lack of much which goes to make up the soul of a great man of our time. The calm "ox-eyes" would need to be changed for those very different, albeit less beautiful ones, in which Shelley says—

> "Whoso gazes,
> Faints, entangled in their mazes,"

A face, far less regular, expressing in its imperfectly balanced form the *unstable equilibrium* in which we live,

> "Looking before and after,
> Pining for what is not;
> Our sincerest laughter
> With some suffering fraught"—

would be to us more natural and true than these divinely calm and immoveable Greek ideals. If modern portrait sculpture is to bear the relation to modern men and women that ancient sculpture did to those of the antique world, it must somehow make room for this irregularity—this *unstable equilibrium* out of which comes Progress. When a sculptor now idealises his model, and

tones down his features till he makes a "classic bust," the result may be good in art, it may even, in a certain way, be a likeness of the original; but somewhat of the soul is absent. We could not put the living man's eyes into the marble and not see flashing out of them something with which those well carved features were not in harmony. We should only possess the image of *Undine* before Love had given her a soul.

Here is another American sculptor—of very different views from Mr. Powers,—William W. Story. Everyone knows the great palazzo Barberini in Rome, the pile where the ineffable beauty of Guido's Cenci has been enshrined for centuries, touching ten thousand hearts by its mute appeal—the appeal of hopeless and bewildered misery on a face so young and fair, so singularly expressive, beneath all its weight of horror and agony, of the power of innocent and childlike joy. In that vast pile of the princely Barberinis, the great staircase of the left wing ascends, by many broad marble flights, above the great height of the *terreno* and the *primo piano*. Very beautiful are these palatial staircases of Italy, especially when seen at night, the

rare lamps gleaming on the marble columns and massive balustrades and great sculptured lions or bas-reliefs inserted in the walls, the width and depth of each step in the long flights being something we should hardly think of for the grandest public buildings in England. At the summit of the Barberini stairs, the visitor who has "right of way" enters Mr. Story's home, an immense apartment of lofty rooms very handsomely furnished, and often filled at his wife's receptions by a large share of both the Anglo-Saxon and Italian society of Rome. A charming daughter and two picturesque little boys make up the family. Of course, the studio is elsewhere, on a ground floor in the Via San Niccolo da Torrentino. *There* are the old Cleopatra and the new and still more beautiful one, and the grand African Sibyl, and the bust of Theodore Parker, and many earlier works. But why describe again what Hawthorne's pen has once touched, or say that the "Kenyon" of "Transformations" is the "Story" of actual life?

Here is an English, or rather Welsh, painter, Mr. Penry Williams. He has lived so long in Rome that the whole spirit and feeling of Roman scenery and character seem to have

passed into his brush. Yet he is still the same unmistakable quiet portly Briton, who might have spent his whole life between Temple Bar and Hyde Park Corner. His studio is full of delicious groups of *contadini*, resting or dancing, Roman shepherds and bright-eyed girls, with behind them the wild desolate Campagna, or the rich soft shades of Albano. Mr. Williams has a countryman and friend in Rome, whose name stands in the first rank of artists of this or any age—John Gibson.

Whether Mr. Gibson be right in tinting some of his statues, whether the ancients tinted theirs, or whether they were right or wrong if they did tint them, one thing is certain, that it is very provoking for anybody who has a glimmering of true art, to find that when Mr. Gibson's name is mentioned, or his works visited, that eternal question of colour or no colour, seems to be the sole idea suggested to the minds of the million by these masterpieces of grace and beauty. Simpering ladies, conceited dandies with eye-glasses stuck between their eyebrows and cheek-bones, pompous old gentlemen, who having laid down the law for years at Workhouse Boards, or

carried influence on Change, think themselves perfectly qualified to decide *ex cathedra* on all affairs of Art, all give their important judgment about the tinting, and there leave the matter. Mostly they make show of (as they suppose) wonderful refinement and purity of taste, by preferring the "pure white marble," and vehemently condemning the colouring as "meretricious;" only a few young gentlemen, who prefer singularity, say that they are ready to patronise the tinting with their high approval. But one and all, harp on the colour, and the colour only, and seem to consider the statue itself as not worth counting. It was truly marvellous the year of the International Exhibition, when the Venus, the Pandora, and Cupid, might have raised for ever the taste of thousands, to stand near them and listen to the everlasting twaddle of nine spectators out of ten about the colour. It is very possible that in future years Mr. Gibson may have added to his fame, as a sculptor, by the introduction of a modern school of tinting for statues. But it is quite certain, that in his own time, he has thereby limited the class of those who can appreciate his works to those who can

manage to refrain from considering the adjunct as the only thing to be noticed—*i. e.*, doubtless, to the only class whose suffrage is of the least value to him.

How shall I describe this great artist, whose features Mr. Boxall has lately made familiar, but whose personality neither painter nor novelist has reproduced? Calm and simple to a degree which makes him seem (as in truth he is in more ways than one) rather an old Greek than a modern Christian, and yet as the French say, *si fin*, in quick and delicate intelligence. To know him at all, is to feel he is a man apart, lifted by his genius and simplicity out of all our common life; to know him well (judging by his friends) is to love him quite as much as to admire. It is pleasant to hear him tell anecdotes of his childhood, still a child at heart. More interesting, however, is it to hear him speak, as he often will, even to the uninitiated in Art, of old classic doctrines and ideas which he seems to have imbibed rather by some process of metempsychosis, like a newly revived Praxiteles, bringing back from Hades all the feelings and habits and ways of thinking of the fourth

pre-Christian Century, than by dry study of books and archæology. Once he said to me: "How ungrateful are Christians now compared with the ancients! Pythagoras offered a hecatomb for the discovery of the square of the hypothenuse; but men now-a-days discover all sorts of things—steam and the telegraph, and chloroform—and yet they never thank God for them—never. They have Te Deums in the churches—yes, Te Deums for battles and so on; but for real discoveries to make the world happier, they never have had one Te Deum—no, not one!"

I ventured once to ask his opinion concerning the two small figures at the side of the Laocöon. To common eyes they hardly seem like statues of boys so much as of small men, and taken in the same group with the nearly double height of Laocöon, they suggest the idea of a different race. The notion had strongly impressed itself on my mind that the intention of the sculptor was to portray the struggles of a giant soul—a Prometheus, contending for the salvation of humanity against the adverse gods, and, though vanquished and crushed by inexorable fate, yet

with indomitable will resisting to the last. The countenance of Laocöon seemed to justify such a conception, and the figures at his side to typify the ordinary mortals in whose behalf he was suffering, and who were themselves utterly powerless in the folds of the tremendous Typhon. It was, in fact, a heathen Calvary, a "Deus Redemptor" between two crucified malefactors. The deep niche, or rather bay, still visible in the chamber amid the ruins of the Golden House of Nero where the group was found, would have well befitted a statue of such solemn import, nor would such an idea as it seemed to represent have been unfamiliar to that age of Mithra-worship and Taurobolia. My little hypothesis, however, like most others spun in ignorance of scientific facts, "out of the moral consciousness" of the spinner, was thoroughly broken up by Mr. Gibson's judgment. The two smaller figures were not dwarf men at all, but young boys. Their proportions were perfectly correct for the ages of the youths whom the sculptor, adhering to the original story, would have designed to represent. Laocöon was a magnificent rendering of a favourite tale, not an embodiment of a great religious idea.

The greater number of Mr. Gibson's works are, of course, well known in England, but there are a few which have never been brought over. One is a life-size figure of the young Bacchus crowned with ivy, and holding up his chalice. It is amazing that this figure should be so little known, for it is most lovely—a very impersonation of Joy; nothing more perfect, as an ideal of gladness, can be imagined. Yet this statue has remained for some years in Mr. Gibson's studio, while English amateurs are found to give £4000 (four times its cost) for such rubbish as the Pompeian Mother—a mere trick of marble-cutting, representing the pumice stones on the woman's dress! This same famous "Pompeian Mother," we have heard of a lady in Italy last year describing, with vehement admiration, as a statue of *Pompey* escaping the Eruption of Vesuvius,—by far the finest thing in Rome! Among others of the less known of Mr. Gibson's statues are his Psyche, finished this year; the Dancing Girl; the Wounded Warrior, with his wife dressing his wounds; and the beautiful new bas-relief of the Children coming to Christ.

Mr. Gibson's pupil, Miss Hosmer, is a lady of

whom the world has heard a good deal, and is likely to hear a good deal more. After such severe application to the theory and practice of her art, as few women are able or willing to give to any study, she began, a few years ago, to produce a series of works of constantly-increasing merit—Medusa, the Cenci, the monument in the Church of St. Andrea delle Fratte (a most touching figure of a dying girl, a friend of Miss Hosmer's), the colossal statue of Benton, her famous Puck and Zenobia (both in the International Exhibition), the Siren Fountain, and one not yet in marble—a Sleeping Faun. Besides these, she has designed a magnificent door covered with bas-reliefs in the style of the old Gates of Paradise, and representing various scenes illustrative of the allegorical figures surmounting it—Earth, Air, and Water. Some of the groups already modelled—of Night rising with the Stars, the Falling Star, and Dawn, are exceedingly beautiful. The most admirable of her works hitherto, however, is undoubtedly the Sleeping Faun; the classic ease and grace of this statue is something marvellous. The Faun is reclining against a tree in a sitting posture,

his left leg crossed indolently over the right, one arm drooping to the ground, the other laid on his lap. The repose of careless youth slumbering after play, could not well be more perfectly expressed. One feels he may have been dancing with the dryads in the grove only a few moments ago, and that the heat of the summer's day has driven him to this spot for an hour's *siesta*, after which he will start up again, shake back his locks over his furry ears, and spring away as light-footed and joyous as ever. Not so fast, however, on second thought, does it seem he will escape. A tiny little *Satiretto*—what Victor Hugo would call a *Gamin Satyre*—with legs like a goat, and a face full of mischievous glee, has seated himself close to the pendant arm of the lazy Faun, and is preparing to tie it tightly in a Gordian knot to the trunk of the tree. The poor Faun, when he wakes, will feel like Gulliver in Liliput.

Of course, Miss Hosmer's sculptures all show the result of Gibson's training in matters of execution, and in some peculiarities of detail known to artists. Yet, on the other hand, there is an amount of character and originality in them,

which render them almost a contrast to those of the master. Mischievous Puck and majestic Zenobia are as little like Gibson's Venus and Psyche as any statues well could be. No one who studies them fairly could, I think, deny to their author that *creative* power which has been certainly far more rarely bestowed on women than on men—so rarely, indeed, that the doubt might be legitimate whether it were ever in a high measure possessed by a woman. *Secondary* creation—the reproduction of poetry and music and painting, as actresses, singers, pianists, copyists—*this*, women have constantly accomplished well. But to write great poems, to compose music, to paint new pictures, or model new statues, these are things they have most rarely achieved. Simply, then, as a matter of experiment, there is not a little curiosity in the examination of the works of the first woman who has combined genius, with opportunity and resolution to study thoroughly under a great master the noble art of sculpture. Yet it would be a peculiarly unimpassioned disposition, I think, which could regard without still greater interest than this the labours of a girl who has spent the bloom of her youth in voluntary devotion to a high pur-

suit, adding to unusual gifts scarcely less unusual resolution and perseverance.

If Miss Hosmer were not a great artist, only an American young lady residing in Rome, and travelling about Europe every summer, she would have the social reputation of being, in the first place, a most skilful and courageous horsewoman (her steeds are the admiration and envy of Rome); and, further, of being the possessor of a gift second to none in value to the owner and in charm to the spectator; an inexhaustible flow of wit, drollery, and genial joyous humour. Coleridge's "happy elf" of a child, always singing and playing, and a woman creating majestic works of art—a massive forehead, with large clear eyes, and a mouth all rippling over with laughter and glee—a man's courage and steadfastness of purpose, and a young girl's fulness of fresh life—such are the elements out of which Harriet Hosmer has been made. It must be owned, it was when Nature was in a rare kindly mood.

Here are two of Miss Hosmer's friends, with whom she has lived for some years back in the happy way women club together in Italy. Miss Charlotte Cushman, the celebrated American

actress, and Miss Stebbins, another admirable sculpturess and most accomplished lady. Of the society often gathered in that bright house in the *Via Gregoriana*, the merry feasts where Campagna wild-boars and American oysters were despatched together amid many a jest; the evenings with large assemblies and fine music; or, better far, those with two or three friends only, and Miss Cushman's magnificent readings of Mrs. Browning—of all these pleasant hours, whoso has been admitted to share them, is sure to retain a lively recollection. Among all the circles into which the chances of a wandering life may throw us, few, I think, are nearly so charming as that of the great American artists in Rome. Yet they are none of them so thoroughly expatriated from America and rooted in Italy, or so engrossed by their pursuit of art, as to be indifferent to the great struggles of their country. It would be impossible to respect them equally could it be so. Last summer, Miss Cushman (who has long retired from the stage) returned for three months to America, and, learning there the need of vast sums for the relief of the sufferers by the war, resumed her profession, realised some fifteen

thousand dollars, and offered them as her subscription to the national cause. The "dolce far niente", which is supposed to affect all sojourners under southern skies, does not seem to have gained much upon this lady!

Mrs. Beecher Stowe was, a few years ago, one of the "People to be met in Italy." The published photographs of her are simply abominable, and the accounts of her given by many who have casually met her, seem to me little more just. She struck me as a woman who had been completely stared out of countenance. The quiet Puritan New Englander, to whom Fame was presented in a more tangible and visible shape than probably to any woman since the world began, was doubtless very little prepared by nature for playing the part of princess in that famous triumphal progress through England and Scotland after the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It would have taken different blood, or at the least different breeding, to meet quite unconcernedly in royal style the gaze of all those crowds. Accordingly, Mrs. Stowe, as I have said, seems to have been looked at, till she could no longer venture to open her eyelids quite com-

fortably. Now and then only she does so, and then the kindly and piercing brown eyes lighten on the interlocutor and transform the somewhat rigid features into a bright and speaking countenance. I had the good fortune once to pass some hours with her on the terrace of a villa on Bellosguardo, overlooking Florence—the terrace described in the last pages of *Aurora Leigh*. The conversation first fell on the closing hours of a great man just departed—Theodore Parker. Mrs. Stowe differing from him utterly as to theology, yet honoured in him a fellow worker in the Abolition Cause, and expressed much regret at having reached Florence too late to bid him farewell. I described to her the peaceful days wherein his ardent life ended, and then inevitably expressed some of the grief in my heart for the close of his labours of love. If I had no other reason to honour Mrs. Stowe, I should always do so for the words she spoke on that occasion, and which I have mentioned elsewhere. Turning to me with warm rebuke, she said, "Do *you* think—Did *he* think—that Theodore Parker has no work to do for God *now*?"

The conversation passed on to discussion of

the possibilities of intercourse between the more spiritual souls on earth and the souls of the departed, an intercourse which Mrs. Stowe believed might be possible now and would perhaps become frequent with the spiritual progress of the race. I urged on the contrary, that if such things ever were, if man obtained evidence of the unseen world through his bodily senses,—from that moment our life here below would be out of joint, the perspective of all events, all past and future joys and sorrows would be distorted by the dazzling vision; the rewards and punishments and hopes and fears, through which it has pleased our Creator to make us struggle hitherto towards the heavenly goal, would all be at an end, since nothing would be left on earth worthy of a thought, in comparison of that eternal Future which our eyes had actually beheld and our ears heard in the apparitions and voices of the returning Dead. Two such different Dispensations as one in which belief in Immortality should be the result only of moral evidence and religious faith, and one in which it should be revealed by direct report of the bodily senses, could hardly be together in the order of Providence. That

God has fitted all the wheels of our mortal lives to the pressure of the first spring of simple Faith, seems presumption enough that while our race remains what it is, the other will never infringe upon them and revolutionise the whole scheme of existence.

I must draw this long chapter to a close without speaking of many more "People one meets in Italy," who yet would suffice to give interest to any circle elsewhere. So many nations meet in Italy, and generally the most remarkable people of each nation, that it can rarely chance to fill a drawing-room in Rome or Florence but some members of the society will be men of mark. Here is a Russian nobleman married to an English wife, whose rooms in the Via Sistina I found strewed with numbers of the *Co-operator* and other pamphlets respecting English social and philanthropic schemes. The young Count, a Crimean Colonel and aid-de-camp of the Emperor, was busy translating Henry Fawcett's "Essay on Co-operation" in *Macmillan* into Russian, for the instruction of his countrymen. There is another Russian—a princess by birth, married to an Italian Marchese—her life devoted

to the care of the poor, in homeliest dress superintending the Nun's schools of San Niccolo in Florence. Here are two young ladies and their mother, who come to reside at a Pension at Naples. Everybody is charmed with their grace and astonished by their accomplishments, but no one can guess their nation—they talk to each other in a tongue we cannot recognise. Somebody takes courage and asks their country, and they reply—that they come from a remote part of Finland! The English members of the party confess in private they believed the Finns to wear seal-skin clothes and drink train-oil! Here is an eminent English geologist, writer of charming books read by everybody. He is working the rich and almost untrodden mine of Italian geology. Here is an Italian Marchesa, born of one, and married into another, of the greatest historic houses of Genoa. Her whole heart is given to the cause of the regeneration of her country, and as her wealth is not enough to give it all the aid she would desire, she paints and sells pictures for the benefit of her schools. A noble looking woman, a most brilliant talker, she pours out stores of information concerning

the working of existing laws and institutions. Very many of the facts given in this book concerning Education in Italy are due to her reports. Here is another Italian, the Minister Count Amari, the greatest Arabic scholar in Italy. Some years ago he translated into Italian the *Solwan* of Ibn Zaffer, a Sicilian Arab of the twelfth century. It has been re-translated into English, and any one who wishes to know how fine a religion Islam may have been, cannot do better than read it. Here, again, is Dall Ongaro, the exiled Venetian poet, a handsome and very winning personage, throwing off, at an hour's notice, pages of airy and graceful versos. Here is Marchese G——, Prefect of G——, the man whose energy secured the arrest of the five brigands of the Aulnis, and who has done much other good service to the nation—a man with one of the most powerful faces I ever saw. I have heard him say that he was present once when the *amiable* Pio IX, with his eternal smile, was in a fury at some popular demonstration in Rome, and lifting up his two arms, and bringing his closed fists down each time with a thump, exclaimed, "Maladetti! Maladetti! Maladetti!"

Of Padre Passaglia, the Ex-Jesuit, certainly one of the most interesting of all the interesting people in Italy,—I have written elsewhere. Here is a great Hungarian exile who has settled himself in Italy; it is said to gain rights of citizenship, and hereafter political and parliamentary influence. Only Italian statesmen say they are in no hurry for such accessions to their voters, and that citizenship is not so easily to be had. He is a big, burly man, with a voice to blow off a roof. His wife, gentle and appealing and innocent of crinoline, busies herself in translating good educational works into Italian, and deserves hearty gratitude therefor. Here is an English scholar of the first class, the author of the *Progress of the Intellect.* He is usually rather shy and silent, but as we drive through the classic lands outside Naples, by the Elysian Fields and Lake Avernus and the Sybil's Cave, he grows excited, and asks his fellow-travellers "Do they remember how Hesiod says this and Theocritus that?" His good, wise wife and her ignorant friend, and the handsome young "Unprotected Female" from Norway and Sicily, who has driven with them, are all shamefully back-

ward about the Greek, and miserably occupied with a basket containing ortolans and Falernian; and the learning of the great scholar only fills them with awe; and they go home (at least one of them does) and study his writings, and think that if, instead of stating boldly unpopular opinions, he were to have defended orthodoxy, we should every day hear the name of R. W. Mackay ring in our ears with the query, how we could venture to differ from conclusions drawn from such stupendous stores of erudition.

Here is a great Roman dignitary, who embarks at Naples for Alexandria. He is a tall and stately man, clothed in purple from head to foot, and reverently addressed as "Monsignore il Vicario Apostolico di Abissinia!" And Monsignore takes occasion, in the cabin, to instruct the company that England is the most miserable and unhappy country in the world, and that it has been going down lower and lower in wretchedness ever since it separated, three centuries ago, from the Catholic church, and that in England there are at least twenty religions. Then a naughty Englishwoman observes that, after all, English travellers did not appear very poor, nor

were English arms or manufactures wholly unprosperous; and that, as to twenty religions in England, there were a great many more; and that, as it appeared God never made two blades of grass alike, it was not very probable He meant to have all human souls reduced to uniformity. Whereupon, Il Vicario Apostolico smiles pleasantly, and says—"Il n'y a que les Anglaises pour ces idées là"; and, by and bye, being very sick, retires from the cabin and the controversy.

And here is a much greater Monsignore, once an archdeacon in the Church of England. He has a face which, if we could only persuade ourselves asceticism was virtue, would prove its owner the very type of sanctity. No one can look on it—worn, pale and noble as it is—without feeling a pang of regret. Such were the great mediæval saints; such are, perhaps, even now, thousands of pure souls striving to lift themselves up to God—How? By the maceration of the bodies He has so fearfully and wonderfully made—by the far worse crushing of the affections and the intellect He gave them to lift them towards His own love and light. The Hindoo Sunnyasi, borne into the air by the iron

hook piercing his flesh, is as little enabled thereby to fly up to heaven, as the Christian is helped to rise up to God by his moral austerities, his tearing asunder of his affections, and lacerating his reason till he is lifted off his feet in the whirl of superstition. Listen to this Anglo-Roman priest, and think that it is a cultivated English gentleman in the nineteenth century who writes such things. He is talking of the Blessed Sacrament, *i. e.*, of the wafer which has undergone a certain form of words supposed to transform it into a portion of Deity. "Where this is not," he says, "all dies." "Does any one know," he inquires, "the name of the man who removed the Blessed Sacrament from York Minster? Is it written in history? or is it blotted out from the knowledge of men, and known only to God and His holy angels? Who did it, and when it was done, I cannot say. Was it in the morning, or in the evening? In any case, when it was done, the Light of Life went out from the city of York."*

* "The Blessed Sacrament the Centre of Immutable Truth"; a Sermon by H. G. Manning, D.D. Longmans 1864.

Such converts to Romanism generally bring to the more difficult dogmas of their new religion a superabundance of faith, which somewhat perplexes their instructors, and certainly differs by many degrees in tone from that adopted on such points by the great old Catholic divines of past centuries.

But Monsignor M. is not always preaching, even if he be always (as he looks) in a state of fasting and mortification. He is a very charming and well-bred gentleman; very attractive, indeed, to young ladies of "High" affinities; and he tells pleasant little stories as, for instance, the following:—A poor Italian, sacristan of a church in Rome, once remarked to him: "Monsignore, those English heretics must needs be very pious people." "Why do you think so?" he inquired. "Because, Monsignore, they go about all the churches and everywhere reading in those red prayer-books—you know, those English prayer-books, with some word like 'Murray' on the back!" Perhaps the difference between Protestants and Catholics in Rome might (we thought) be described as that between Murrayolators and Mariolators. But the jests about Murray in Italy

are naturally endless. An Italian gentleman told a young friend of mine that he was perfectly appalled at the erudition of all the English girls with whom he danced at balls—they quoted Virgil and Horace, about every place he mentioned, and knew much more than he did about every picture and statue. At last he found they all quoted the *same* things, and made the same artistic criticisms; and this new miracle puzzled him still more, till in an English friend's drawing-room, he found the clue to all in a well-worn copy of Murray. I do not, indeed, much wonder at the observation of one of these poor girls, who said: "Rome would be a very nice place, *if there were no sights.*" The way in which she had probably been hurried by Paterfamilias every morning through galleries and churches, just verifying Murray, reading those horrid small double columns, and with a rapid glance at the picture or the building, merely identifying the object with the description, and then hurrying on to "do" another gallery and church before luncheon, would be enough to make her hate "sights" for the rest of her natural life. Nobody seems ever to reflect that the whole object of beholding

sublime architecture and beautiful paintings is to receive sublime and beautiful impressions, to have the æsthetic sense touched and elevated. But the beautiful cannot be felt with one eye on a double-columned guide book; and the sublime emotions are effectually banished from the noblest pile in the world, if, instead of calmness and what the French call "recueillement," we bring into it hurry and fuss. The purely *intellectual* process of hunting up a page in a book, and verifying what the writer says with the objects before our eyes, is about the most ingenious ever devised for nullifying all *æsthetic* sentiments on the occasion. Hurry-scurry is bad enough, but Hurry-Murray decidedly worse. Yet these Italians and Monsignori (I do not mean the English Monsignore in question), who laugh at us, are themselves not guiltless, as regards their own "sights." In the first place, it is rare to find a native gentleman (except a professional artist) in any gallery in Italy; and as to an Italian lady, I think I have met about three in all those I have visited, and those three were engaged exclusively in studying the bonnets of the *forestiere*, and looking cross at the gentlemen

who had led them into such stupid places. Secondly, in the churches, the behaviour of the priests and canons in attendance, not immediately engaged in performing mass, is quite as little religious as the study of Murray. I have watched them—Canons, Cardinals, and heaven knows what other dignitaries, in purple and scarlet, and nice white lace (which ought to have belonged to us women, and not to big, unwashed priests, with heavy jowls), and seen them, in the Duomo, at Florence, at St. Peter's, and everywhere, whispering and nudging, and passing snuff-boxes, and mopping themselves with their blue cotton pocket handkerchiefs, and, above all, eternally performing that process which it pleases us to attribute especially to Americans, and which it is to be supposed (in all senses) they carry further than any other people. Sometimes there are troughs full of saw dust for their use in the choir, but oftener the beautiful marble pavements suffer unprotected. Punch makes a strong-minded American female, in spectacles, hold up a placard intimating that "Gents are requested to refrain from expectorating on the Boundless Prairie." I should be very much dis-

posed to exhibit a similar entreaty, as regards priests and mosaic pavements. Once I remember going with a party of friends into the beautiful church of Sta. Maria del Popolo, at Rome, just as some service had concluded, and finding the large semicircle before the canons' chairs in a state not to be described,—the magnificent inlaid marbles of the floor having been visibly subjected to a similar process for a period reaching back into a very remote antiquity. "Imagine," said one of the party, "those priests going on in this disgusting way, in such a place as this, and while a religious service was being performed!" "I suppose," I suggested, "that they mistook the psalm they chaunted, and read it '*Expectans Expectoravi.*'"

Here is an English poet, lately ennobled, travelling in Italy, of whose interests he has long been an able and ardent defender. He says, "Hereafter, when the history of the resurrection of the Italian nation is written, it will be attributed to four men we rarely class together now—Napoleon III, Cavour, Garibaldi, and Mazzini." Assuredly whatever opinion we may be inclined to take of the line of policy adopted by the last of

these great men, there can be little doubt he has done much in past time to rouse the national patriotic feeling. *Now* we may think (and those who seem to me best informed on Italian affairs, do decidedly think) that the Mazzinian party have an injurious influence in Italy. A *Constitutional* Opposition is a thing useful, if not indispensable, to the action of a constitutional government. But an Opposition which notoriously aims, not to *work* the newly made Constitution, but to *transform* it, and which (as Garibaldi proved), would not scruple to take up arms at any moment for purposes of its own—is, assuredly, an Opposition which a yet unconsolidated government, with such external foes as Italy has, may well fear and repudiate. Mazzini himself has announced that "*If* the Italians prefer a Monarchy to a Republic he is content with a Monarchy, although" (as I have heard him say, perhaps justly) "no subject of England can form an estimate of the unreliability of continental kings and their tendency to make common cause with other kings against their own subjects."

This great man, though not one of those to be

"met *in* Italy," is for ever to be associated in all men's minds with the country for which he has laboured and suffered so long. As I said before—his party seems now to me to be rather adding difficulties to the cause of Italian freedom, than giving it aid. But whether in this my imperfect means of judging may or may not mislead me, I cannot refrain from expressing the *personal* respect which, in common with those who know him better, I feel for Mazzini. Probably few more pure-hearted and devoted men have ever lived, or men whose life has been pitched in a higher moral key. Those who have really known him intimately for years, speak of him as a Saint, as a man whose words come to them from a sphere of thought to which few attain. Those who only know him in the brief intercourse of society must all have felt (as I have done) the indescribable charm of his serene and gentle manner. His face, care-worn and suffering, with broad white forehead—his emaciated figure (the double-breasted waistcoat carefully covering his chest from English fogs) give forcibly the idea of the scabbard worn out by the sword within. An old Hebrew prophet would

talk of him as bearing in his own soul all the sorrows of his Israel. Yet in social life he becomes the cheerful and cultivated companion. I have heard him once institute a most exquisite critical inquiry into the relative æsthetic and moral merits of Shelley and Byron—his verdict being for the man who strove to translate his poetry into action, and wrote his noblest verse at Missolonghi. Again, Mazzini debated the subject of language, frankly allowing that his own had utterly degenerated and become washed out, and, at the same time, stereotyped and immoveable under the influence of political and religious despotism. "It was one of the many works," he said, "which would need to be done for the regeneration of Italy—to reform and vitalise the language."

Of Mazzini's friend, the greatest of living Italians, who has lately received from England an ovation such as America in her wildest burst of hero-worship never gave, I know personally nothing. Probably, if the charm of his all-conquering looks had fallen on me (a charm which perhaps explains more than one page of past history), I should be able to partake in the enthusiasm he

has universally excited. That he is brave as a lion, disinterested, self-denying, kind-hearted, an excellent general for his own style of warfare—all these good and great qualities seem his beyond dispute. I must, however, avow the wish that he had either wholly repudiated, or at least partially disowned, that atrocious "autobiography" edited for him by the European Barnum—Dumas. Did Garibaldi really write that *Mélange melodramatique* of Baron Munchausen and Cooper's *Spy*, which has been put forth in his name and (to all appearance) with his sanction? The story is familiar how he once confided the MS. to a certain lady well-known in Italy, his devoted nurse at Spezzia—how he asked her for it again as a loan, and then transmitted it to Dumas to edit and publish. The book itself comes forward in the strictest shape of autobiography: "I did this; I said that; I went here and there." Dumas has now and then inserted notes in his own person, saying that he had referred to "the General" for explanation of certain passages, and that his reply was, so and so. Either the book is a most impudent romance, merely founded on the original, and

having no sort of claim to be what it pretends, or it is a real autobiography, the work of Garibaldi. I confess the latter hypothesis is so unpleasant that, since reading the book, I have never felt I could thoroughly honour Garibaldi, till some way or other it should be refuted. Even that he should have permitted such trash to go forth without publishing one of his innumerable manifestoes to repudiate it, seems unaccountable. The world has a right to suppose he really portrayed his own exploits in this "King Cambyses vein," if he actually gave his manuscript to the editor and never denied the veracity of the edition. The luckless book throws an air of clap-trap over his whole career. His wife Anita was an heroic woman; his affection for her is one of the most pleasing traits in his character. But who can bear to think his wooing was made in the fashion he describes it—that he watched her across a river; passed over to her one day, and walked up to her deliberately, saying for all introduction, "Vierge! tu seras à moi!"? Atala, dramatised for a Parisian theatre, would speak with some propriety in this style. When it comes to a really great man so addressing his

future wife, it must be admitted that bathos can no further go. The rest of the book is all in keeping with this anecdote. Some simple people may imagine that Italians constantly speak in this manner, and that *Bombastes Furioso* is a proper type of an officer in the army of Victor Emanuel. I can assure them, however, that there cannot be a greater mistake. The Italian disposition is altogether the reverse of the French. The language is cumbrous and wordy; but the character of Italians is so devoid of the self-consciousness which is the source of theatrical affectation, that perhaps no people in the world are so simple—so free from clap-trap and bombast. I have known many Italian officers, as well as civilians, and have been particularly struck with their entire simplicity as well as good-breeding. What affinity brought Garibaldi and Dumas together, and made the hero give the mountebank not only the highest scientific office in Europe,* but the task of sending down to posterity the proper view of his own career, is, I confess,

* The curatorship of the Museo Borbonico and of the Pompeian excavations. To an immense salary was added a palace in Naples, with fourteen covers a day, provided at the public expense.

a problem which lies sadly in the way of that entire admiration one would desire to feel for such a man as Garibaldi, and which in truth I did feel for him before I read this miserable book.

One more of the "People one meets in Italy" remains for me to describe. It seems almost like trespassing on sacred ground to speak publicly of one most dear and reverenced; yet to omit the name of Mary Somerville in an account of the residents in Italy would be impossible. There is no need to tell the world now that she is the most learned woman (as regards physical and mathematical science), who has ever lived; that her books are masterpieces of their kind; or that her life has been the example to which all who have at heart the elevation of her sex, point to prove that the greatest intellectual height is attainable by the best of wives and mothers. That life, however, has so long been quietly passed far away from England, and her works have been for a generation so familiar as scientific class-books among us, that there are many, I imagine, to whom it will come as a pleasant surprise to learn that she has outpassed the common limits of human mental

activity, and is now, in her eighty-third year, engaged in completing a treatise which will probably be considered her greatest work. The book is devoted to the elucidation of the most recent discoveries of science regarding the ultimate particles of matter, organic and inorganic; the revelations of the microscope and of the solar spectrum—everything, in short, to which its beautiful epigraph from St. Augustine may fitly apply—

"Deus magnus in magnis, maximus in minimis".*

Probably the mere copying of this book in writing similarly firm and clear would be a task beyond almost any other woman of equal age. What its actual value as a literary work may be, it would, of course, be mere impertinence for me to say. Mrs. Somerville is truly the HUMBOLDT OF WOMEN, and this is her "Cosmos," the great work done after the common working hours of life are over.

Yet something very different from Humboldt in gravest ways is Mary Somerville. There are qualities in human nature nobler than even the quenchless thirst of knowledge and untiring energy in its dissemination; and those nobler and diviner gifts of which the man had little share,

* God, great in great things; greatest in the least.

the woman has much. The clearest brain probably ever granted to one of her sex has been vouchsafed, *not* to a woman lacking in tenderness, or simplicity, or vividness of religious consciousness, but to one in whom these have all had their highest development.

It is surely a thing to be very grateful for in this world of fainting hearts and wavering minds, if we can point to one who has passed through fourscore years with ever widening vision and ever growing faith; and whose long sojourn here has left still all "unspotted from the world." Eighty blameless years, full of duty and of honour, all glorified by that high pursuit of Truth which is the loftiest of human joys—what blessed sight is this! Beholding it, we *know* that old age is not the dim closing of life's scene, but only the shade of the portal of immortality—a twilight, indeed—but the twilight, not of the Evening, but of the Dawn.

Perhaps, there is no great force in the testimony of ordinary minds respecting their convictions of things unseen. Carrying onward through life without examination the religious ideas instilled into them in childhood, their witness of

consciousness is hardly more than the witness of their teachers at second hand. It is hard to calculate, however, on the contrary, the value of the evidence afforded us by one who has faced the dread problems of existence through a long life of independent study; and who, educated in such a creed as that of Scotland in the last century, has followed the progress alike of religion and of science, and stands at last in old age abreast of the foremost thought of our time. *This* is a voice to which we listen with thankfulness when it tells us that the result of knowledge is FAITH.

Does the reader ask what is the bodily presence of this great and good woman? Is that strong brain lodged in a powerful form, or does she, in her mental superiority, weary of common men and women, dwell a little aloof, keeping her "solemn state and intellectual throne"? Perhaps it would not be very marvellous if it *were* somewhat difficult for her to descend to such common gossip as befits a morning visit, or a little evening social gathering. Natural or not, however, it is always quite clear that it is no difficulty at all to Mrs. Somerville to throw herself into the interests of those around

her—to converse with each in his or her own way—to be, in short, simply the kindest and pleasantest member of society. I recollect once asking a friend to describe to me (before I had met him) the outward semblance of Theodore Parker. After telling me of his looks, she wrote, "Parker is a *gentleman*—a small word for a great man, yet worth somewhat, also." It would be idle to say Mrs. Somerville is a "lady;" a daughter of the old House of Fairfax was not very likely to be anything else.* Yet, to imagine her rightly, it is needful to bear in mind that this most learned of women so far diverges from the proper type of that order, as to be quite simply a high-bred lady with the peculiar charm of manner of the elder generation—alas! now so nearly passed away.

In nearly every respect, indeed, Mrs. Somerville must be a sad stone of stumbling to those who delight to depict that heraldic creature, "the Strong-minded Female," and have established it as a fact that the knowledge of Euclid is incompatible with the domestic affec-

* Her father was Admiral Sir William Fairfax, Bart., a collateral descendant of the Parliamentary general.

tions, and that an angular figure, harsh voice, and brusque behaviour, are the necessary preparatives for feminine authorship. Mrs. Somerville is learned enough to alarm the best constituted mind; she is ardently interested in the education and elevation of women, and she has even divulged such terrible opinions about the Creation and the Flood, as to have incurred the penalty of being preached against in York Cathedral. Yet that slight and fragile figure, clothed in rich brown moire antique—that head, rather delicately formed than large, surmounted by that soft lilac cap (which surely came from Paris?)—those features so mild and calm, with all their intelligence—that smooth hair, more brown than grey, even now—those kind mild eyes, aged, indeed, but needing no glasses—that lady, in short, who is talking in a low voice (probably about the last new novel, or the merits of Gounod's "*Faust*"), or laughing merrily over some little jest of her visitor's—*that* is said to be the translator of La Place's *Mécanique Céleste*, the authoress of the *Connexion of the Physical Sciences*. It is very distressing and unaccountable, but the identity seems pretty well established!

All hearts must rejoice to know that an old age so beautiful and venerable is surrounded by everything which can make it happy. Mrs. Somerville is the centre of more care and affection than can ordinarily fall to the lot of the aged. Though she has survived both her husbands (the last, who loved her so devotedly, died two years ago), she has her three children, attached old servants, and very literally "honour, obedience, troops of friends." It is touching to live near her, and see how English and Italians alike vie to offer her any gratification—flowers, music, or social pleasures of any kind she might be disposed to accept. Among the most congenial of these friends, and whose daily intercourse forms no small share of her enjoyment, is that same Marchesa (Teresa) Doria, of whom I have spoken as among the ablest and most patriotic of Italian ladies. Mrs. Somerville habitually spends her mornings in writing for several hours before she rises—her books and papers on her bed, and her little pet sparrow hopping about, now perching audaciously on the precious manuscripts, now on the head so full of knowledge he little recks of! A certain splen-

did white Pomeranian dog and a parrot complete the circle. Very fond is the Padrona of her animals, and of all animals; and only this last winter has she exerted herself vigorously to bring all possible influence to stop the hateful practice of vivisection which disgraces the science she loves. In the afternoons she drives round the beautiful shores of Spezzia or the Acqua Sola at Genoa. Her son's visits from England are her great seasons of pleasure. He comes to her as often as his office may permit, but her two daughters never leave her and seem to live only to surround her with their cares. All strive to conduce to her happiness. And she *is* happy—happy in the innocent and noble pleasures she has found in this life—happier still in her firm faith in a yet holier and nobler life to come. The "Pilgrim" has reached the "Land of Beulah where there is no more night." Nature *has* led her most faithful follower "up to Nature's God."

Travelling much through the world, and seeing the great glories of scenery and of human art, or conversing with the larger minds of our age, is a matter for which I think we can hardly

fail to be thankful when it falls to our lot. At every turn there is room for present enjoyment, and the certainty of future gain in memory thereof. Only this reflection injures our satisfaction—how many others who could have more enjoyed and better profited by our experience, find it denied them! How many who, in comparison of us, are "prophets and kings," "have desired to see the things we see, and have not seen them"—nor shall ever see them in this world! But among the greatest of all the pleasures, and the most dear and sacred treasure of memory which many wanderings have given to me, the one for which I am most grateful is, *not* that I have seen all the chief masterpieces of art —nor visited the loveliest scenes in Europe—nor beheld the "temples made with hands" of St. Peter's, and Milan, and the Parthenon, and Baalbec, and the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem: it is that I have been allowed to see and know and love Mary Somerville—and learn that Age can be so blessed, and Womanhood so perfect, and Immortality so secure.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### PLACES WHERE THE AUTHOR WROTE THIS BOOK.—PEACEFUL PISA.

A SLEEPY city is a sort of anomaly. The country is the place for sleepiness. When people gather themselves together in towns, and huddle their houses one against another, it may be presumed it is for sociability, and because they do not wish for "golden silences," and "vernal airs," and "the sweep of scythe at early dawn," and all that kind of thing, so much as for a little bustle and business, and the sense of living in a hive and not in a snail-shell. Whenever we alight on a quiet town, it is sure to be a superannuated one. New towns are all lively. Only old ones are somnolent, and try, as Cowper says, to

> "Drag the dull remains of life
> Along the tiresome road."

Such a place exists in virtue of the *vis inertiæ*.

Having once existed, it takes a long time to clear itself away from cumbering the earth. People go on living in it, and even visiting it, because other people lived in it, and visited it formerly, till, by slow degrees, the force of habit grows too weak to break the ever-growing resisting medium of dulness, and then the poor old city sinks into final decrepitude and decay.

Nevertheless, as Paley justly remarks: "Happiness is to be found in the purring cat, as well as in the playful kitten." Placid and gentle old age is a very pleasing sight; and there are some sleepy cities which eminently partake of those attractions. In the first place, such a city is always distinguished for good breeding. It is not bustling and arrogant, like prosperous, upstart mercantile towns. It receives its fewer guests with more honours, and, indeed, with a certain urbane manner, which always seems to express: "I have seen better days, but I am very happy to receive visitors at my hotels, and shall charge you just the same as heretofore." There is no hurry or confusion, or missending of things. Everybody knows the heaven-sent visitors the day after their arrival, and their

letters from the post will be heralded, and their orders from the quiet shops carefully attended to, and hack vehicles will wait for them any length of time, and they will be adopted in general by the old city altogether affectionately. Every little particular of their private history, which they choose to disclose, will be gratefully received as a crumb to allay the gnawings of that natural hunger for useless knowledge which in such places endures perpetual mortification, and is, of course, proportionately ravenous.

In the afternoons, in such towns, there is always some one spot where there may be found a partial and factitious vivacity; as in winter, we find a few belated bluebottles, buzzing in some stray gleam of sunshine in a particular window-pane before retiring into cobwebs and annihilation for ever. But evenings and mornings and midnights, and all parts of the city, save *the* street in question, are slumberous and peaceful invariably, as if a Solemn League and Covenant had been entered into by the inhabitants, to make no needless noise or fuss on the road, from the cradle to the grave. When they die, the hearse does not go much slower than they habi-

tually drove or rode alive, and the cemetery is only one degree more silent than their streets. Let us hope that "Requiescat in Pace," or "Mors æterna quies" are not ineffectually inscribed on their tomb-stones. A lady we have heard of, once rebuked her too-socially disposed daughters, for hoping that Heaven would be a state of vivid existence. "Unless," said the poor old chaperon (doubtless with many recollections of "gay" evenings before her mind), "unless Heaven be DULL, it will be no Heaven to me!" The inhabitants of sleepy old cities will, doubtless, echo the aspiration, and, we hope, find all that they may desire.

Pisa is the Bath of Italy, or, rather, what Bath was ten years ago, before it underwent rejuvenescence, and put on a new wig. Pisa is warm, and Pisa is a place for invalids, and Pisa is eminently aristocratic, and has seen very much better days indeed (only those days are seven centuries ago instead of one), and Pisa is gouty, and has got broad pavements,—and altogether is a proper place wherein to toddle to the tomb. It differs from Bath in a few particulars. There is a river in Monmouth, and a river in Macedon,

however, and both begin with A, and Pisa has got a blue sky, and Bath has a grey one; and Pisa has got a Duomo, with statues with noses, and Bath has an Abbey, with statues with no noses; and the similitude need not be further expanded.

It appears that in dreams we have peculiar ideas of identity. We dream it *is* a certain place, and are quite satisfied that we are correct in our opinion, but the house we know to be small and whitewashed, is huge and red-brick; the room we know to be lofty is low; the garden we know to have a fountain in the middle has got a haycock or any other absurdity. Still our faith remains unshaken. Also as regards people: Our respected Aunt, most proper of ladies, appears in top-boots; our learned friend the Archdeacon, has a round jacket and trundles a hoop. The old are young, the ugly beautiful, the good hateful, and the stupid omniscient. Yet the faith in their identity never leaves us, though every condition by which in waking hours that identity could be known, is changed. A similar sort of hocus-pocus exists between Florence and Pisa. The same river Arno rolls through them both,

and on each side are rows of houses of the same character with "Lung' Arno" written at the corners; the same Tuscan people inhabit both cities, and the same blue sky of Italy bends over all. But Pisa is the dream town and Florence the waking one. Pisa is all silent and dull, and the houses all stained and old, and the shops poor and small, and the very river Arno seems changed, from the noisy rattling stream dancing over its artificial falls near the Ponte Carraja of Florence, into Lethe itself, slowly and dreamily meandering through dull old Pisa, only bearing a few heavy barges, and a huge ferry-boat which might belong to Charon, on its muddy tide. Florence is the brightest city in all the world, fresh and clean, almost as if built yesterday, with its marble or newly-painted houses and green jalousies, and handsome shops, and brilliant equipages, and shoals of gay gesticulating people; and flower-stalls at every corner, and glorious Duomo and Campanile glittering in white, black, and red marbles, like the toys of a demigod, in the clear blue atmosphere—every rich moulding visible a mile away. Florence the Beautiful—Florence the City of the Lily—Florence the Con-

queror! Poor, decrepid, dull, old Pisa, to whom the Arno bears down only your ice and your drainage—if she were a little jealous of you, would it be very wonderful?

But living in Pisa people grow into a calm and placid state somewhat like that which is induced by sitting on the sea shore and listening to the waves beating up monotonously hour after hour. We persuade ourselves we are thinking deeply, but in reality we are thinking of nothing at all. Our brains have performed the process which some of the Eastern sacred books say was the beginning of all things. "After twenty millions of *yugs* of ages, ten hundred thousand millions of particles concreted together and formed—emptiness!" The particles, I believe, happily concreted, after several trials, into "Chaos"; but our ideas seldom reach that stage. Rather do we attain the sublime condition of those sages who obtained beatitude by looking continually at their own noses. We are supremely blessed,—in the next stage of existence to annihilation. Such is the happy result of long sojourn at Pisa. As the local proverb avers, *Pisa, pesa, à chi posa* (Pisa weighs on him who

rests in it). A gentleman we know has received these soothing influences so long, that his excellent intellect is always at least a mile off, and out of the reach of hasty calls. Being asked one day with too rude a jar on his reflections, "how he was," he decided, after some labour, on appealing for aid in such an emergency to his wife: "How *am* I, my dear?" The faithful spouse replied: "Quite well now, I think;" and the gentleman was enabled to transmit the intelligence without too much difficulty to the inconsiderate querist who had driven him to such straits.

People who don't live long enough at Pisa to get into this happy state, take life quietly and sun themselves on bright afternoons by the waters of Arno-Lethe; and talk about their coughs, and read *Galignanis* a week old, and are mild and sociable and slightly plaintive. Nobody does any work in Pisa; at least, if they do, it must be secretly under ground, for in the streets and open shops, men, women and children lounge all day long; and the men all smoke; and the poorer women sometimes hold a distaff languidly; and others do not think it needful to make such a pretence, but merely

gossip a little, unaffectedly. There may be schools—there is even said to be an University at Pisa; but, if so, there must be perpetual vacation, for the boys are always in the streets. Nice, gentle, civil youths they are, no *Gamins* of the Gavroche genus, nor wild English schoolboys ready for a "lark." Nobody takes "larks" at Pisa except roasted ones, ten on a little spit together.

Two miles off (they call it three, and make it as long by going thither at funeral pace) there is one of the king's one hundred houses, on the edge of the wood, and in this place there are some dozen of camels. To see these camels is the only thing anybody thinks of in the way of a curiosity, and the drivers take travellers to their stables without even asking them whether they want to go there, so sure are they of the gratification of beholding those peaceful Eastern beasts, which the "fitness of things" has brought to Pisa of all places in Europe. There they go in the forest with their long necks moving like swans and their soundless feet, carrying loads of wood in a calm, Pisan manner, very becoming and appropriate. All the country round is perfectly flat. Doubtless in the "glacial period,"

(an allusion to which of course accounts for everything), it was ironed out smooth by a glacier, or an estuary, or an earthquake. Any way it is delightfully flat now; for many miles there is no trouble of going up or down the smallest hill. Canals glide through the plain and heavy barges through the canals, and people like them better than the fussy railway, and send goods by them even from the very stations. Formerly Pisa was close to the sea, but the sea being naturally inconstant, got tired of Pisa and went away to Leghorn. There are still at the lower end of the Long Arno the round-roofed boat-houses, where the galleys of old used to be made and launched. There are big doors for the great galleys and little doors for the little galleys, but neither big nor little will ever come out of them any more.

Nor is Pisa without other memorials of the days of old, which Moore, had he been a Pisan (conceive Tommy Moore a Pisan!), would doubtless have sung along with the "Collar of gold" and other reliques of the glories of the past. There are two hideous iron cages, like nests for ill-omened birds, made of iron wire, hanging out at

the corners of the principal Piazza. These cages used to hold human heads. How grim and ghastly they must have looked in them no tongue may tell, and fortunately, in our day, no living man describe. Close by these hideous things there is a little old door, very coarse and massive, a garden door of past days apparently, opening through a blank wall into a court. In that court there once stood a Tower. That was the Tower of Famine. There it was that the Archbishop of Pisa shut up Ugolino de' Gherardeschi with his four sons, and left him to perish with hunger; after having, as it is said, been driven in his agonies to prey upon their corpses. Those were good old times, glorious old "ages of faith," the beginning of the great cycle of Italian Art. How sad it is to live in these degenerate days, when the Archbishop of Pisa is only a quiet gentleman, spending his 117,000 francs a year comfortably in his huge palace, without any tower wherein to lock up anybody! Dante (as all the world knows) makes Ugolino gnaw the ecclesiastical head out of which such cruelty proceeded, to all eternity in the *Inferno*. It would have been a better compensation for his

wrongs to have placed him in Paradise with a better repast, say (to satisfy his utmost cravings) with that famous Last Feast before him of which the Rabbins tell us, when Behemoth and Leviathan will be cooked for the delectation of the Blessed, as the two *pièces de resistance*.

But all these are exciting recollections, rather disturbing in Pisa. Let us rather keep to the Lung' Arno, and placidly stroll along under the vast palaces with closed shutters and silent halls, of which half the line is composed. Here is one belonging to the King, but of course he never comes to it—why should he? Here is another all covered over with quaintest terra cotta carvings of centuries back. It has become a dilapidated café. Here are the Medicean balls upon ever so many houses, those "pills" which have had such ups and downs in the world, and have gone to the pawnbrokers at last! And here is a lofty and very handsome marble palace in good repair, and with a fine carved lion-rampant on its ancestral shield. But over the architrave of the great doorway hangs an iron fetter, and on the lintel of the door is inscribed, in raised letters of red marble, "ALLA GIORNATA."

What does all this mean? The legend says that there was once a Christian, taken by Barbary corsairs, who managed in his slavery at Tunis to lay by enough money to purchase his own freedom, and then by happy speculations to amass large treasure. Then he came home to Pisa, and built himself this palace, and hung his own chain over the door, and called the world to witness he had earned his wealth "*alla giornata*" (by day-labour). That is the only solution offered of the problem of this mysterious palace.

Outside the walls, Pisa has small suburbs. It does not want them, seeing it has shrunk inside from 150,000 to less than 25,000, and no more fills its space than an old man, wizened and thin, would fill the clothes he wore in his prime. It has, however, a watering place close by—San Giuliano by name—and San Giuliano is precisely the sort of fashionable resort Pisa ought to have near it. At midsummer people go thither for baths, but now in spring it is inhabited by one lame lady and half a dozen men and women who rent the lodging houses. Everything is quiet, and silent, and comfortable. When Carnival comes in Pisa, three

shops hang out some calico dresses and half a dozen masks, and some mistaken young lads hire them, and walk about in them to everybody's disgust; but it is soon over, and forgiven as a weakness of youth, and Lent comes in naturally, and Pisa is itself again.

In sober earnest, there are moods in life in which this kind of place is not uncongenial. We want November as well as stormy March or glowing August. Neutral grey is a good hue in its way. We cannot always be "up and doing with a heart for any fate." The tide of human activity and enjoyment surging and tossing around us, is sometimes trying to nerve and heart when we have been cast up like a weed on the shore, and know not if we shall ever get afloat again. Better let the sick and sorrowful herd apart, and leave bright places to bright people. Sleepy old towns are not useless in the world, so long as each forms a sort of natural Sanatorium on a large scale, for the sick, aged, and infirm.

The real interest of Pisa centres, of course, in its marvellous group of buildings, the Baptistery, Duomo, Leaning Tower, and Campo Santo. Considering how few things of interest there are

in the city, it seems a subject of regret they should all he huddled together in one corner on two acres of ground. It is, however, a fine open space, affording rare advantages for seeing each of the edifices. The green turf on which they stand sets them off also, as it is much to be wished all other fine buildings could be set off. How different did the Greeks understand this art!—either building their temples on some natural elevation, like the Acropolis, or the rock of Sunium, so that the columns might stand with the sky for a background; or else raising the whole ground around the foundations, and buttressing it with walls, as in the case of the Temple of Jupiter Olympius. *We* build cathedrals like St. Paul's, and then allow houses to be clustered round them, so that not from one single spot can an uninterrupted view be obtained—nay, a view uninterrupted by the most sordid and heterogenous obstacles. A lady attired in velvet seated in a cart, or a splendid drawing-room with a door open into a scullery, are not more monstrous anomalies than our costly edifices on whose decoration we have bestowed treasures, and which we then permit to be hidden from sight be-

hind the paltriest and ugliest of shops and offices.

Pisa's sanctuaries, as I have said, stand all alone. The visitor passes out of the silent deserted streets into a large open green in which the Duomo occupies the centre, with the Baptistery on one side, and the Leaning Tower on the other. Behind all is the quadrangle of the Campo Santo. In front, close to the entrance, is one of those sei-cento groups of colossal babies in marble which more effectually, perhaps, than anything else which could have been devised, serves to make all the buildings behind it seem small and petty—their columns are hardly so big as the limbs of these unhappy *puti!* Are these far-famed and wondrous edifices really and truly beautiful? All that immense display of labour and skill—has it achieved a triumph of art, or is it like a Chinese pagoda, only an elaborate mistake? There is no arguing these things in fact, but the question suggests many curious reflections.

Religious architecture may be the expression of the religious sentiment in two ways. It may have sprung out of such a sense of awe and reverence, that with the mysterious power of true

Art, it conveys that awe and reverence to the beholder. This is the sublime in religious architecture, and it seems to have been attained in very early times. The Druidical monuments display it to such a degree that I suppose no man ever saw Stonehenge for the first time without feeling his cheek blanch, and a sense of awe steal over him. The Egyptian temples, the Rock temples of India, the earlier Greek temples, the first Mosques, and such cathedrals as Winchester, all belong to this class. It is impossible not to feel that the men who built these fanes were themselves profoundly religious; that, according to their various lights, they looked to the Deity with solemn veneration. Sometimes they seemed to wish to veil their faces before Him in the darkness of cavernous cells, and under the shadow of vast arches. Sometimes they strove to make their temples so stately and magnificent that we might deem they had in their liturgies such a Psalm as the transcendent Hebrew Dedication:

"*Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!*"

They sought to make their temples worthy of

the visitation of a Deity, and wrought as with a sense of stupendous Power and Mystery above them.

Again, the religious sentiment may show itself, not in the Sublime, but in the Beautiful—not by lifting up vast piles, by the force of awe and veneration, but by adorning and decorating edifices which shall be devoted to God's service. The sentiment in this case does not *breathe through* Art, it merely *employs* Art, which might, for any special character it possesses, have been used in a secular work, and which it has only seized upon and dedicated, as any other rich spoil, to the Deity. The spectator, in this case, cannot be borne away into regions of high emotion by the exalting power of the Art itself. He can only be *edified* by the sight of such an amount of voluntary pious service. The "LAMP OF SACRIFICE" shines out in the work, but not the lamp of such genius as should be in architecture what the genius of Milton was in poetry, and of Handel in music. Nay, the Art may be (and often is) so inappropriate that we may justly consider the sacrifice, however well meant, as a mistake. The ludicrous figures often to be found in

the early pictures, the sing-song tunes affected by Methodists at all times, the wretched painted card-board images stuck in Calvary itself, the gargoyles and devils on the roof of Notre Dame, who can pretend to consider these things as *religious?* The late King of Abyssinia, having received from some traveller six coloured wood-cuts of the Melton Mowbray Hunt, thought he could not do better than dedicate such a treasure to the Church, and accordingly hung them round the chancel of the chief cathedral of his capital. Immediately behind the high altar, was one of the series, representing an unfortunate sportsman at the moment of making a head-foremost somersault. These "works of Art," it must be avowed, however well intended, could hardly have served much to animate the piety of the Abyssinian congregation!

In a far less absurd manner, but yet to be classed under the same head of *appropriated,* and not naturally religious Art, we may surely count the minutely ornamented and costly buildings which seem in many countries to have succeeded to the earlier, more massive, and more impressive ones. Much of the Flamboyant, the Perpen-

dicular, and Tudor styles are of this sort; and in more barbaric shape, the pagodas of India and China—Greek churches nearly everywhere, and modern mosques. The very type, however, of such buildings seems to me (if I may venture to give an opinion on such a matter) these world-famous churches of Pisa. They present precisely the idea of works accomplished with infinite care and pains, and ungrudging cost; but not a glimpse of the inspiration of awe or wonder. Genius of a certain kind presided over them—a genius graceful, fanciful, and rich; but not a genius laden with the deep sentiments of a solemn religion.

There is, indeed, another theory we may prefer. We may say that not only may the same religion have the two kinds of edifices we have described, but that a different religion will necessarily inspire a different type of art to those who have most fully drank of its spirit. A highly moral and spiritual religion will inspire a noble and solemn art; a lower polytheistic religion will only inspire a fanciful and playful art. Thus, a relation might be established (if all disturbing causes were removed) between the grandeur of

the faith and the sublimity of its temples. In such case, again, these buildings of Pisa would seem to bespeak a creed which appealed but little to the more solemn sentiments of our nature. It *was*, in truth, a polytheism far more than anything else, that which prevailed in the twelfth century—the Supreme Father hardly holding as prominent a place as Jupiter did in the heathen Pantheon, but rather thrown utterly into the background by Christ and the Virgin, and uncounted tribes of Saints, Angels, and Apostles. The wonder is, not that such a creed inspired an architecture fanciful and ornate rather than grand or solemn, but that a creed very little, if at all, better presided over the designs of York and Salisbury. Perhaps the Southern race and the Northern race took the same symbols very differently, even, as in crossing the Alps, from one Romish country to another, we pass from the roadside sanctuaries of smiling Madonnas and Bambinos to the awful crucifixes, with bloody images dreadful to look on. At all events, it is singular to note that the Gama Tayloon and other mosques erected when Islam was yet in the early fervour of enthusiasm, in

the eighth and ninth centuries, were all imprinted with a character of simplicity and grandeur not ill befitting the Monotheist faith. At the very same time, in Byzantium, where Christianity had reached its lowest ebb, and all its purest doctrines were overlaid by superstitions—when quarrels about the Homousion and Homoiousion—about Monothelite or Monophysite heresies occupied the foreground of religion—at that time the paltry and elaborate Byzantine architecture took its rise, and substituted ornamentation for dignity and grandeur.

After all, the morals of architecture must ever be very imperfectly developed; for no man sat down, probably, since the world began, and originated a building out of his own inspirations. The most original architects were doubtless still guided by the precedents of the buildings before them, which they did but modify, adapt, enlarge, or diminish. The early Greek houses, with logs to support the roof, doubtless suggested the first temples *in antis*, from which, by regular degrees, grew the splendid double-columned Corinthian Olympium, from whence again, by regular process, came the Byzantine Church and Saracenic

Mosque, then the rounded Norman style, and then the Pointed Gothic, from the intercrossing of the rounded arches. It was all done step by step, and we can trace how the Greeks went from Doric to Corinthian, and how the early Christians modified the Roman basilicas into their churches, and the Arabs took the classic columns for their mosques, and the Crusaders brought away the plans of the mosques of Cairo to France and England, and these same old Pisan merchants took from Byzantium the colonnades of their Duomo. The sentiment may have *guided* the choice and modification of the copy, but it can never have *created* its work as a sculptor or painter may do—a poet or a musician. Taking these buildings of Pisa, however, for what they unquestionably are—monuments of extraordinary labour, skill, and care—how do they affect us? This "lamp of sacrifice," shining out in all this inconceivably elaborate carving, and colonnading, and rich fanciful mouldings, and pillars of varied marbles, one more costly than another, and inlaying of stones, like the *marqueterie* of a table or a box—what does it say to us as a book written seven centuries ago, and open before us now?

There is nothing harder to realise than the great moral truth that the sustained practice of self-sacrifice in daily life is as noble and holy a thing as any one act of heroism conceivable. We all *say* we believe it to be so; but still our hearts beat and our eyes kindle at some grand trait of generosity and self-abnegation; while we take the life-long devotion of many a mother, the angelic patience of many a wife, the martyr-courage of many a sufferer in our hospitals,—as if they were pretty nearly things of course. Practically, we all know that it is immeasurably easier to do one great action than a thousand little duties. Few human beings are so constituted that there is not at the bottom of their hearts something which responds to any *great* demand and enables the weakest and meanest to go through extraordinary trials with unexpected dignity. It is not the applause which waits on noble actions which gives this strength, it is the real human predestination to things high and grand—that predestination which makes petty and paltry existence more irksome and wearisome than even great sorrows; and the glare of fifty footlights worse than the shadow of

a tremendous gloom. Man, the Immortal, "half angel and half ape," feels the angel wings thrusting themselves forth, when some heroic action tempts him to soar into the upper air. But the little daily sacrifices whose *real* grandeur is hidden under the cloak of custom, which have nothing in them striking or unusual—how hard it is ever to recognise that they who perform them are often more than Heroes, are *Saints* also? How infinitely harder to give such sacrifices their right place in our own self-legislation? Perhaps somewhat of this mismeasurement of moral things passes into our estimation of works of Art, wherein the "Sacrifice" has been of the oft-repeated and elaborate sort. Some minds seem specially to value and delight in them, but the commoner feeling is that the labour was wasted; that nobler designs would have been far preferable to richness of ornament or intricacy of fanciful ornamentation.

I know not how this may be and whether we *ought* to feel always "edified" by laborious care in Art, as we ought certainly to be by the sustained effort of self-sacrifice in the ordinary affairs of life. Such a conclusion must depend

on our judgment of the ultimate purpose and meaning of Art, whose discussion would be far beyond our present theme. Possibly, also, there may be in Art as in Morals, a certain pettiness and scrupulosity which a sound taste may force us to condemn in the one as in the other. Chinese temples, dress and furniture, are not really beautiful for all the detail of labour expended upon their tiny patterns and dots and streaks of a hundred colours. Actions are not always really virtuous because an immense amount of scrupulousness and trivial fussing has been used regarding them. There is a "Morality of the Nursery" of small observances and petty exceptions into which people whose lives are very narrow and uninteresting are apt to fall—a Morality (as it has been well said of late) which rather comes of a desire to attach the large character of Duty to the trivial details of daily existence and thereby raise them into interest and importance, than from any real delicacy of a sensitive conscience. We are assuredly quite right in not giving to such Baby-house Morality the reverence due to real virtue. Ostentatious deviation from commonly received

formulas of courtesy which mean nothing *but* courtesy in anybody's apprehension, and exaggerated obedience to forms and times—the whole "mint, anise and cummin" school of ethics, deserves no honour at our hands. Nay, such keeping of the eyes down on the little pebbles and straws and ruts of the road, seems directly to prevent men from lifting their thoughts to noble and holy aims above and beyond themselves. We should do them a service by urging them to spring forward a little, warmed by some generous aspiration to serve God or man, even if in doing so they were to neglect ever so many of their straws and ruts. It was a splendid saying of Clarke, when some friend of the scrupulous school asked him if, in his enormous and absorbing labours for Abolition of Slavery in the West Indies, he did not find himself neglecting many religious observances to the detriment of his soul? "I have been thinking of doing God's work (in some such words ran the reply of the philanthropist), and He will take care of my soul." Regularity, be it never so utterly and foully selfish—if it be the very regularity of uninterrupted egotism never turning aside for

any mortal's benefit—has a strange power to attract approval from a certain class of minds. A man who is regular in his habits and erects his habits into a religion, is sure to receive a respect which will be denied to another who sacrifices himself and his habits continually to the interests and pleasures of his fellows. But such respect is utterly misplaced. All these Bye-Laws of Morals men make for themselves are essentially *immoral*. The one eternal Law makes no provision for such local enactments.

The architecture which should hold to Art the relation which such Baby-House Ethics hold to true morality, is surely then worthy of no great honour. It may be elaborate and fanciful, but it is petty and finnikin. Such, with all respect for higher judgments of better qualified critics, I must avow is to my feeling the architecture of the famous Duomo, and Baptistery, and Campanile of Pisa.

Whether the fault is in confectioners, who have profanely made their cakes like the Baptistery,—or in the Baptistery, which bears a natural resemblance to a round sponge-cake, with sugar ornaments, I cannot pretend to decide. The

likeness is, in any case, equally strong and unfortunate. Perhaps we may justly decide, that if there had been no affinities between the architecture and confectionary, the boldest of pastry-cooks would not have thought of taking a church for a model, even if he were going to make, what we have heard an Italian avvocato speak of with restrained enthusiasm, as the product of a certain shop, "*dei pasticci* SUBLIME!"

Pisa, however, this year of 1864, has had a gay festival—a festival in honour of her great philosopher Galileo. It was the tercentenary of his birth; and every kind of preparation was made to celebrate the occasion on the 18th of February. The sun, who had been chary of his smiles of late, shone out for a few hours (as he was in courtesy bound to do, in honour of the sage, who underwent the torture to give him his proper place in the universe); and very soon the windows of the Lung' Arno effloresced, after the manner of Italian houses, with hangings—blue, red, crimson, and green—while banners of the bright tricolor waved from every available bridge and balcony. With the broad swollen Arno below, and the Pisan mountains, tipped with

snow for a background, and crowds of men and women in gala array, from Leghorn and Florence, thronging the streets: the scene was gay and pretty in no common degree.

The first centre of attraction was the little church of San' Andrea, in Fortezza, where Galileo was baptised. Over the door was the inscription:—

GRAZIE IMMORTALI
AL SUPREMO DATORE D'OGNI BENE
PERCHÈ IN QUESTO GIORNO
OR SONO TRE SECOLI
IL NATALE
DI GALILEO GALILEI
ILLUSTRÒ PISA
D'INSPERATA CHIARISSIMA LUCE.

(Immortal thanks to the Supreme Giver of all Good, that on this day, three centuries ago, the birth of Galileo Galilei illumined Pisa with unhoped-for and resplendent light.)

To this church the prefect, with all the magistrates, professors, etc. of the city, repaired, in full state, to hear a *Te Deum*. It is said that it was a fortunate circumstance that the baptism of Galileo in this little chapel afforded such good reason for fixing on it as the scene of the good prefect's very just thanksgiving; for, had he

desired to celebrate it in the Duomo, the Archbishop of Pisa would by no means have given his consent, much less his presence, to such a service. Be this as it may, the good feeling of such an act is surely worthy of remark. My knowledge of modern history is small enough to leave me at a loss to remember another occasion wherein St. Ambrose's grand old hymn,—so often raised for bloody battles, or the coronation of worthless despots,—has been used to thank the "Giver of All Good" for illuminating the world by sending into it a greatly-gifted soul to dispel the darkness of ignorance and superstition! Did any one think of thanking God for Shakespeare?

Close to the little chapel of San Andrea is the house wherein Galileo was born. It consists of a range of chambers, of no great pretensions, surmounting offices, and apparently forming part of the great "fortezza," containing the palace and gardens of the Scotta family, whose present representative (an old Countess of eighty), bequeathes her estate to the Corsini of Florence. The room in which Galileo was born is a large square one, with rudely-built walls, and a single window. The furniture is modern. Beneath the

room is (and probably always was) a stable. Over the door of the house is a white marble slab, lately erected, bearing the inscription "Quì nacque Galileo Galilei; Febb. 18, 1564."

The *Te Deum* being over, the next affair was a great public dinner, at two o'clock; then speechifying at the university, then a boat-race on the Arno, then illuminations, a concert, and a ball—assuredly enough amusements for one day's festival.

The illuminations were beautiful; the broad, winding river reflecting the thousands of lights in the palaces on either side, and the four fine obelisks of lamps, erected at each end of the principal bridge. The Leaning Tower was, of course, the chief object; and those who have never seen a Pisan Luminara, would find it difficult to imagine how beautiful this strange building can become. The six lower stories are each surrounded by a fringe of fire, while behind each tier of columns, large stars of lamps are placed, so as to produce the effect of the whole being actually transparent. Round the summit is another crown of glory. The sky this evening was cloudy, with a half-moon only occasionally

breaking forth; and the appearance of the tower thus beheld was indescribably lovely—like nothing I have ever seen before. Least of all, did it resemble a solid edifice, reared by human hands, from whose summit, three centuries ago, the great philosopher performed his experiment on the velocity of falling bodies. A fragile lamp of white paper, to be overthrown by a breath, seemed more like its substance, so exquisitely delicate and transparent.

On the whole, the festival has been very successful. The "Starry Galileo" might have found some compensation for his "woes," in receiving all the honours his native city could offer to the day of his birth. Nor is the celebration of such an anniversary without serious interest. The Pisans are perfectly aware of the meaning of their act, and that they have been holding a festival to commemorate the victory of Science over Superstition; of Truth over all the power which the Church could bring to crush and silence it. The archbishop's palace, standing black and unilluminated, beside the blazing Campanile, witness of Galileo's experiment, was like an allegory of the war between Dark-

ness and Light; and among the gay voices of the people, more than once I caught the phrase—ominous to ecclesiastical ears—"*San* Galileo!"

After the celebration of Galileo's birthday, many small publications appeared connected with his history. The most interesting of these was a pamphlet, entitled "*Nel Trecentesimo Natalizio di Galileo.*" It contains some original letters of the great philosopher, which had escaped the notice of Viviani, Alberi, and his other editors and biographers. The first letter from Galileo, dated June 26, 1612, is certainly curious. The subject is a discussion of the relative merits of painting and sculpture. Galileo is all in favour of painting. He says:—

"As to what sculptors argue, that Nature moulds men but does not paint them, I reply that she makes them not less by painting than sculpture, because she both sculpts and colours—but that this is their imperfection, and a thing which detracts from the value of sculpture; because, the farther are the means by which a thing is imitated from the thing itself, so much more the imitation is marvellous. . . . Do not we ad-

mire a musician who by singing represents the complaints of a lover, much more than if he did it by himself weeping and crying? Still more we admire him, if, being silent, by means only of his instrument he describes the same. For this reason, then, what merit is there to imitate the sculpture of nature by sculpture itself? Certainly none at all, or very little; but most artful imitation is that which represents relief by its contrary—which is a plane. Painting, therefore, is more admirable in this respect than sculpture."

This is surely a new and curious canon of art. Mr. Gibson would have something to say to it in reply. Galileo goes on to say:—

"The argument of the eternity of sculpture is of no value, because sculpture does not render marble eternal, but marble renders sculpture eternal; and this privilege is no more peculiar to it than to a rough stone. Finally, sculptors always copy, and painters do not copy; and those imitate things as they are, and these as they appear; but, inasmuch as things are only in one mode, and appear in infinite modes, the difficulties of attaining to excellence in art are greatly increased by so copying them;—where-

fore, excellence in painting is more admirable than in sculpture."

The letter concludes by Galileo advising his friend Cigoli (who seems to have consulted him on the subject) to keep to his own art of painting, adding—

"For you have rendered yourself with your canvas as worthy of glory as our divine Michael Angelo with his marbles. So I conclude, cordially kissing your hands, and begging you to continue to me your love and the further observation of the spots (on the sun).

"GALILEO GALILEI."

An appendix to the pamphlet contains a notice of a sufficiently remarkable incident in the life of Galileo, hitherto unknown. The authority is an autograph paper of Diego Franchi di Genova, preserved in the Monastery of Vallombrosa, numbered 120 in the archives of the library. Franchi says:—

"The name must not be omitted of the great mathematician Galileo Galilei. *He was a Vallombrosan novice*, and made the first exercise of his admirable genius in the school of Vallombrosa. His father, under pretext of taking him

to Florence for the cure of ophthalmia, removed him from his religious ties. When grown up he was intimately connected with Don Orazio Morandi, the Abbot-General, and participated in some of his misfortunes, arising from the too curious contemplation of the stars." Morandi died in prison in Rome, October 6th, 1630, after having been tortured by order of Urban VIII, the cause of his persecution having always remained hitherto a matter of doubt. The learned editor, Professor Selmi, very justly remarks: "It is interesting to consider that, if the tortures inflicted on Galileo by the Inquisition are called in question, we now know that a man who was his acquaintance and admirer, underwent others so cruel as to cause his death," and (as Franchi plainly intimates) for the same offence of "too curious contemplation of the stars."

This little account of Pisa must not close without some mention of the one great charm of its neighbourhood—the Cascine. Too often in Italy people spend all their time in going over galleries and churches, and utterly omit to visit the lovely scenes beyond the walls—the slopes of Bellosguardo over Florence, or the grand and

glorious Campagna of Rome. But there is no temptation of the kind in the present case. People may as well go out of poor dear old Pisa, for, after the Duomo has been visited, there is no earthly reason to stop in it!

There is a long avenue through the fields, and then come the Cascine. Passing the king's hunting lodge and the stables of the camels, a noble broad road runs right through the forest down to Gombo. A glorious forest it is—oak and chestnut, and a variety of trees, but mainly magnificent pines of a kind resembling the Scotch fir in wildness of growth and roughness of bark, yet having fuller foliage. A whole avenue of these, very old and grand, runs for two miles at right angles to the main road from one cascina (farm-house) to another; and, again, further on, in the depth of the wood, a vast *laund* has been cut, running from the Fiumicello to the Arno further than the eye can see. Beyond and above the dark green woods, glitter in the spring sun the snowy tops of the Carrara mountains with their broken outlines of marble. It is a nobler forest than Fontainebleau, and grander in character than the Schwartzenwald. The ground

is overrun with all the rich herbage of Italy, and huge heather grows under the pine trees like a thick shrubbery. At last the great avenue opens out and terminates right upon the sea shore. The glittering Mediterranean fills the whole span of the horizon, and breaks gently on the narrow belt of golden sand, where the woods abruptly cease. A lovelier strand can hardly be found anywhere; to sit beside it, and then wander in those odoriferous woods, and watch the sun go down into the west over the sea, and the purple hues of evening gleam over the mountains, is perhaps as much of pleasure as nature can well give us. And *what* pleasure is there in such days! What are the enjoyments art can ever give, compared to them? Can art bring us calm and peace, and soothe pain of heart and weariness of brain? Can it lift us up nearer to heaven? Perhaps some art can do so to some minds. But Nature is for all, and at all times. "The woods were God's first temples."

> "*Not vainly* did the early Persian make
> His altar in high places and the peak
> Of earth o'er-gazing mountains, there to seek
> That Being, in whose honour shrines are weak
> Upreared by human hands."

We have assuredly lost much, partly by the exigencies of our variable climate, partly by the formality of our Protestantism, in making religion so completely an *in-door* thing as it is with us. Our worship has lost many elevating influences, and Nature has lost many hallowing associations. The Romanist way-side shrines, to be found alike in the cultivated fields and vineyards and in the loneliest solitude of wood or mountain, are beautiful in their origin, and doubtless, even with all the superstition wherewith they are joined, of no small spiritual service. Through the magnificent chestnut groves of Vallombrosa, how the graceful crosses (older than the day when Milton clomb those thick-leaved slopes!) each with its striking inscription,—seem to befit the place! How the Moslem oratories in many a lonely Syrian path, with the niche pointing out the place of prayer, give a new direction to the thought of the wayfarer! By dint of keeping all our devotions for churches and chambers and special hours and special days, all minds among us not very profoundly imbued with religious feelings (or else driven by varying creeds from common worship) come to feel

that woods and plains, the sea-shore, and the mountain-side, are altogether *secular* things—places where heathens might sacrifice to Baal or Ormusd, but quite unfit for Christian prayer or praise. Yet, in truth, a vast and noble forest is a cathedral such as all the architects of the world could never build, and whose incense of flowers and choirs of happy birds are better than all the smoke of censers or roll of golden mouthed organs. We may say truly in such a spot—

"Lo! how God Himself has planned this place,
So that all sweet, and calm, and solemn thoughts,
Should have their nests amid the shadowy trees!
How the rude work-day world is all closed out
By the thick-curtained foliage, and the sky
Alone disclosed—a deep zenith heaven,
Fitly beheld through clasped and upraised arms
Of prayer-like trees! There is no sound more loud
Than the low insect-hum, the chirp of birds,
The rustling murmur of embracing boughs,
The gentle dropping of the autumn leaves.
How the wood's breath is perfumed! From the pines,
And larch, and chestnut, come rich odours pure;—
*All* things are pure, and sweet, and holy here."

The road from the forest back to Pisa passes on one side near the modern Campo Santo which has replaced the old one (adorned by Orgagna's tremendous paintings) in ordinary

use. Near, also, to the road is the new and very humble little field and chapel belonging to the Chiesa Evangelica (the Italian Protestants) of Pisa. There is always something deplorable in the idea of separate cemeteries for the members of different sects. Have we not been enough divided in life by all our poor systems and creeds, that when we go underground, and "the right ear which is filled with dust" can hear no more of truth or falsehood—we must still be separated wide apart? Methinks the noblest Burial Service ever chaunted, or the finest prayers uttered over a grave, would not compensate for the offence against human nature of this Exclusiveness of Death. A different cemetery, a wall, or even a gravelled walk, used to mark out—what? The different thoughts of God once held by the souls which animated the poor clay below—the souls which have now passed away where there are no differences of religious opinion! How the departed may sigh as they sit, perchance side by side, in heaven, to see such pitiful distinctions made between their corpses mouldering alike in the dust of earth!

## CHAPTER XIX.

### NERVI WITH NO SIGHTS.

"Beautiful Italy! golden amber!
Warm with the kisses of lover and traitor!"—

SANG Elizabeth Browning, the last and not the least of the poets of two thousand years who have lauded the lovely land. And two thousand years to come in some yet unspoken tongue, more rich and noble than human lips yet have uttered, doubtless other poets will sing in higher strains, and praise again and yet again "Beautiful Italy."

To enjoy this beauty thoroughly, however, it is before all things needful that we content ourselves with one kind of beauty at a time—the beauty of Art, or the beauty of Nature—and cease to hold the deluding idea, that we can feast our eyes as a greedy child crams itself alternately with sugar-plums and strawberries. Sugar-plums

are good, and strawberries are good, and Italy has plenty of them for everybody. The lover of the one may go every day to some wondrous gallery, or church, or museum, and pay down his franc to the custode, and enjoy himself to the uttermost of his appetite, on such delicious bonbons as Raphael and Michael Angelo have prepared for him. But let him not rush out and pluck hastily the earth-berries beside, and think his surfeited appetite capable of appreciating them. No: if he want to know what Italian nature is, let him put away all divided homage from his heart; let him give himself to humble and patient attendance by early dawn, and starlit eve, and under the glow of noontide sunlight; and then the spirit of mountain, wood, and wave will reveal herself in her beauty divine. Thus I hold that the spots in Italy, where nature is really to be enjoyed, are, above all, those wherein there are no works of art to compete with her—where there are no galleries, no churches, no buried Roman towns, or Etruscan tombs—in a word, where travellers most rarely go, where there are no "sights."

Such a place is Nervi, on the Riviera dell' Le-

vante, only a few miles from Genoa, on the road to Spezia. It is quite a poor little town, not a picture in it, for aught I know, nor a church worth visiting—not a shop where a sheet of paper, or a pair of gloves, or any of the miscellaneous little huxtery—"lollypops, mouse-traps, and other sweetmeats," of the poorest English hamlet could be procured. It has no history, and nobody expects it to become a "rising emporium," or fashionable watering place, or anything else detestable, *in secula seculorum*. Poor little Nervi! There are no oil-lamps in the one long straggling street, not to speak of gas, or pavement, or superfluities of that kind. There are no Institutions of any sort—nothing that by any chance you can be expected to go to see; and when you come back to England, without having seen, be snubbed by more dutiful travellers for neglecting, with the perpetual exclamation of surprise: "What! you went to Quaranta-mila-vedute, and didn't see Baldardassero-di-Cinque-Cento's Madonna? I never heard such a thing! What do you travel for, may I ask?" Nervi is despatched in half a column of Murray, the greater part of which is devoted to the attractions of the

"Stabilimento;" and the much relieved reader is only told he *might* go to see a Church, if he liked, but, evidently, will not be much to blame if he decline the undertaking. As the said church is situated several hundred feet up an apparently inaccessible cliff, and the weather at Nervi is rarely below summer heat, it is not too much to expect that the gracious permission to neglect it will be accepted.

But Nervi has a few attractions too, though it has no pictures by Baldardassero, nor statues, nor churches. There is a villa at Nervi, which, unless the reader have peculiar taste, he will, I think admit, a man *might* live at, without great self-denial, even without seeing the pictures, statues, and churches aforesaid.

Out of the village street, just beyond the high-peaked, ruined old bridge, there is a little lane, then an ancient looking iron gateway,—a cancello, as they call such things in Italy,—with a porter nearly as old as the gate, dreaming and pottering all day beside it, though his task does not seem to be a very arduous one, for Nervi is far enough away from Genoa, and everywhere else in the world of business or fashion, to secure that

visitors should not be over numerous. There is a short paved road, bordered with hedges of roses, then an open gravel space, with two large orange trees in the midst; perfect giants they are, at least eighteen or twenty feet high, and covered with masses of blossom. Between them is the "portone," the *official* Italian hall-door, apparently calculated with nice adjustment to the necessities of a race of whom Goliath was a puny specimen —doors which, I suppose, are shut in Earthquakes and Revolutions, but which seem invariably left open under less peculiar emergencies.

The house to which this door serves as entrance is a tall old pile, built in the shape of the picture and window-frames of a hundred and fifty years ago in England—a quadrangle, with each of the angles salient, as if forming four square turrets. The *terreno*, or basement story, slopes outward pyramidically, like an Egyptian temple. Well-proportioned and massive, he who is in search of a good design for a country house had better study Villa G— at Nervi. He will not find many more desirable. Only on one side is the symmetry of the plan disturbed, and that is on the front, where, on each side over the

door a deep terrace with marble balustrades projects over the lower story—a delicious terrace where one may lie all the day long and look over the sea and feel the cool sea breeze.

The whole centre of the house is occupied by a hall two stories high (two Italian stories, equal to three English ones). Needless to say, it is large and lofty and cool, with its black and white marble floor and arched roof. Across each of the four corners run balconies with great marble balustrades, and supported by heavy marble carvings; and all round the hall are hung old faded portraits of bygone counts and barons; and pieces of armour,—breast-plates and helmets and swords, and eight great stands full of lances and halberds. It is the Italian version of the "Fine old English Gentleman's" abode:

> "The hall so old, all hung about with pikes, and guns, and bows,
> And swords, and good old bucklers, which had stood some tough old blows"—

Only instead of oak panelling, and black roof, and huge fire-place, ready with its andirons for the yule-log, there are marble floors and galleries and windows on all sides ready to admit the floods of Italian sunlight, or be closed during

the hot hours by the jalousies, till the cool darkness is only broken by the beautiful stair and its glistening columns.

The upper stories of the villa—there are three of them—have abundance of quaint rooms and curious passages, and another fine hall, and drawing-rooms, full of modern handsome furniture and flowers and pictures. But we will not pause to describe them. There is one room more—the dining-room, opening into the lower hall on one side and into the garden on the other; a long arched room, with pretty frescoed ceiling and odd bronze medallions of some unknown gentleman in armour and lady in ruff; and over the door an I.H.S., to remind us we are in Italy—as if there were any danger of forgetting it, when through the wide open door and lofty windows pours the soft warm air, and beyond the olives glitters the blue Mediterranean, and the perfume of the lemon-flowers in the orchard says "Italy! Italy! Italy!" to every sense.

Breakfast is over—the French idea of a breakfast, with fish and hot things and Montferrat wine; and Mr. Banting's pamphlet, which lies on the adjacent sofa, has been referred to in

solemn conclave to discover if lobster, or peas, or some other dish, "pleasant to the eye and good for food" is forbidden fruit; and having ascertained that it is utterly obnoxious and injurious, everyone who, like Falstaff, has "much flesh and therefore much frailty," has liberally partaken thereof; and the three brown cats, which have prowled round us like small tigers, have all been fed, and likewise the white one, which always comes last and looks pathetic, and is called by the Padrona, the "Interessanter Katze;" and the heroic spaniel, who belongs to nobody, but who, having saved her pups from a flaming tree where cruel boys tried to destroy them, has established a permanent claim to universal respect and unlimited bones; and the pups themselves, thus snatched as brands from the burning, but still so unconverted as to have nibbled to utter destruction two treatises on politics, towzled an ambassador's dispatches, eaten a portrait of Victor Emanuel, and torn straw from straw the hat of the present unfortunate author—all these have been satisfied; and three or four brown-skinned and black-eyed beautiful little Italian urchins, who have been

furtively peeping from behind the rose-bushes, have been suddenly transported into Elysium by *la petite Comtesse* cramming their little brown paws with French plums and almonds. And then the day at Nervi may be said to begin—not over early—at about twelve o'clock.

Opposite the breakfast-room, beyond the grass pleasure ground and the beds of roses and azaleas, there is a broad straight walk through the orange orchard some two hundred yards long. Oranges and lemons—large oranges, like good sized laurels, and dwarf Manderine oranges not bigger than myrtles, and lemons trained against the wall—all in masses of blossom. Just as I write, the *contadini* are gathering the flowers into cloths which they lay on the ground. About half the produce they seem to strip from the trees, leaving still as many flowers as will by and bye cover the whole bush with glowing balls of fruit. A curious luscious harvest it is—these little *hay-cocks* of orange flowers. By and bye, they will be distilled into sweet water, and send their fragrance all about Europe. Now we are at the end of the orange garden. On one side a grass walk leads up to a little mound of roses

surmounted by a white Tuscan column with a Madonna with outstretched arms on the summit. In front there is an olive wood, all marked off by grassy paths lined with rose and myrtle hedges, and here and there leading to stone seats sheltered by cypresses or laurels. Here is another orange garden and a little walk, and then a terrace right over the sea—the waves breaking on the rocks over which it is built. Such a view as there is here! To the left, the lovely coast of the Riviera dotted with houses and with the mountain slopes covered with trees and—stretching out into the sea about ten miles off,—the grand headland of Porto-Fino. In front, the deep blue Mediterranean glittering with a million diamonds. To the right, the whole gulf of Genoa with the coast trending away far off under the snowy summits of the Maritime Alps, on the uttermost horizon. Overhead a huge old pine stretches across the terrace and shelters us from the sun.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of these sea-views at Nervi. The white sails of innumerable boats and ships passing across the gulf in every direction, the water itself sometimes (of a clear

day) of a deep metallic *smalt;* sometimes soft and tender as the blue eye of a young girl; and sometimes, when a storm is threatening, dashed with great patches of that grassy green which Claude Lorraine loved to paint, and which seems so unnatural in his pictures, till we have seen the real colouring of Italy—all this makes the sea no less than the land, another world of beauty from our own. There is a corresponding terrace to the one I have described, in another villa in Nervi, where the pine-trees fragrant as burning cedar in the hot sunshine, throw their shade across a walk close over the shore, and produce that peculiar effect, which must be seen to be understood, of the contrast of their deep green boughs with the azure of the Mediterranean. At the end of this terrace is a pavilion, a large square room with cool scagliola floor and sofas and rocking-chairs, and tables covered with books, and windows opening down to the ground,—one to the wood, one to the side of the coast and Porto Fino, and one immediately over the sea. Sitting there in the utter stillness, the ineffable beauty, with the soft waves of the tideless Mediterranean gently playing among

the low rocks a few yards away, and the white lateen sails sweeping like swift and silent birds across the waters, one's heart grew soft and weak, and it seemed as if all the burden and the struggle of our English life were a troubled, senseless dream; and here in this paradise with one true friend and many a book—books to read, and books mayhap to write, would be all we should ever crave in earth or heaven. The beating breast of ocean would lull us as when we were children in our mother's arms, and her soft voice murmured some low sweet song whose words we comprehended not, but whose tone meant peace and love. Care and sickness and all our pitiful troubles would be soothed even as they used to be when half smiling at our baby woes, half weeping with motherly tenderness and compassion, she hushed us to rest and smoothed back the little tangled locks from the hot tear-stained face, and bathed the crying eyes, and at last let us drop asleep when we had kissed her, and promised to weep no more.

But we must not linger all day by the shore, beautiful as it is at Nervi. We turn back into the olive wood, and establish ourselves by an old

stone seat, sheltered by a semicircle of red cypresses. It is quite a lonely little spot, with a grass walk leading nowhere, and where nobody has any work to do, not even such Eden-work as gathering orange blossoms. There are only (outside the olive wood) vines running up their supporting stems, ready by and bye to be looped together in endless garlands, and a pear tree or two, and some figs, and a little corn, and a row of roses—all the worst farming in the world, like everything in Italy, but all the more delicious on that account. The wild flowers and, I fear, a good deal of grass besides, grow through the wheat, and the wheat grows through the vines, and the vines grow through the figs and apricots, and in the middle of all there is one patch of beans and another little bed of oats,—and then there is the Madonna and her roses. An English farmer would be disgusted with such agriculture, just as an English gardener would be with such gardening; but very humbly I beg to tell them both the result is none the less lovely and luxuriantly delicious. As I write at this moment at this same stone seat, with the birds singing and bees humming in the clover (grow-

ing, alas! along with all the rest, in the wheat), I think not many spruce farms or well ordered gardens would be half so charming. Beyond the little village, far enough away for no jarring voices to reach me, I see the houses among the olive woods which cover the sides of the mountains, and the little churches perched high up with their white *campanili* ready for the music which is to come by and bye. When it is evening, the whole air will suddenly become resonant with the silvery joy bells which at such distances form a sort of universal melody in the atmosphere rather than any defined sound of any kind. I know not what is the difference between the composition of the bells used in Italy and the south of France and those with which we deafen our ears in England, but it is as great as can be conceived. The moment we pass into the region of the southern bells, the sense of pain and irritation which with such infinite cost we procure for ourselves in the north gives place to one of pleasure and repose. The iron-clang which "makes *day* (especially Sunday) hideous" in our towns, and induces us to sigh with envy of that blessed isle of Alexander Selkirk where

"The sound of the church-going bell,
The valleys and rocks never heard"—

that dreadful Bell of England is heard no more. Sunday shines a Sabbath day to us in brighter lands. We may remember with a smile the instruments of torture which our beloved compatriots have expended their sovereigns in establishing for their hebdomadal mortification; on one of which we have heard of their inscribing with natural pride, if not with high poetic feeling, the distich—

"At proper times my voice I'll raise,
And sound to my Subscribers' praise!"

There are no such bells, and I think I may venture to say no such distiches in Italy.

The fresh breeze from the sea, some forty or fifty yards off, is blowing to me over the garden of lemon trees; the birds are singing all round; unconverted little Brand having presented me with an old shoe found in the field, has lain down beside me for her siesta, leaving me in temporary peace of mind regarding my books and my hat. A lovely little lizard, green and yellow, with bright black eyes, has just crawled down one of the cypress stems, within reach of my hand. The

roses in the hedge along the grass walk where I am lying, are glowing in their sweet beauty. All things are calm and sweet and beautiful.

But the evenings in Nervi are the best part of the day. There is in front of the old house, just before the dining-room door, a garden seat, between two acacia trees and two huge bushes of lavender, which grow at their feet. Just the place for coffee after dinner. The sun has gone down long enough for us to be safe from that unwholesome air which accompanies the sunset hour in Italy. It is cool and calm, and as the stars come out, the sweetness of the atmosphere is inexpressible. For a time, we can see the purple sea, and the lights in the vessels passing over it. An archway in the old wall, all overgrown with lemon trees, frames the picture to the right—a few olive trees, the sea breaking on the shore, and the tower of the village church, whence the chimes of the Ave Maria are sounding softly on the evening air. In front, there is the orange grove, among which a few fire-flies are beginning to flit, and to the left, a little bosquet of shrubs, —magnolias, and myrtles, and daphnes,—among which, standing in the rich green grass, a white

marble statue is gleaming. By and bye, it grows darker, the distant view fades away, the bells are silent, only the sound of the waves slowly beating on the shore breaks the perfect stilness. The fire-flies leave their roses, where "all the long and lone daylight" they have lain folded in the heart of the flower, and dart hither and thither through the darkening trees. The heaven is so full of stars, there seems no space into which the eye can penetrate where in some infinite Beyond it finds not a world—even as in a holier life with stronger vision we shall gaze around and find, amid all which seems darkness now, some new and radiant token of the handiwork of God.

At last we leave the garden and re-enter the house. There is one more room I have not yet described, a large one leading out of the dining-room and forming the private study of our host. A gloomy place it ought to be, the study of an ambassador, one of those wily designing German diplomatists who are universally known to be always plotting the extinction of liberty all over the world. Nevertheless, it looks an innocent room enough, and the con-

sumption of cigarettes and reading of half the Reviews and Magazines of Europe seem to all appearances the chief pursuits of the occupant. Stay—there is an awful picture just over the writing table, which must portend something worse—only, unfortunately, it belongs to the Italian owner, not the German tenants of the house. I never saw such a picture in my life. A large oval frame some six feet high, and on the canvas the representation of a man in black robes and long grey wig, with such a face as, thank heaven! is not often seen in this *upper* world—whatever it might be in the lower one! The forehead high and narrow, the huge nose hooked like an eagle's, the lips *rolled back* as if doubled over into the most hideous semblance of a grin, and the small eyes peeping out of their slits actually round the corner. If the cleverest caricaturist had designed to compose a countenance expressive of cunning, cruelty, baseness, and perfidy, he could hardly have succeeded so well as the portrait painter who some hundred years ago doubtless limned as accurately as he could this likeness of a scion of the noble Italian family of G——. To make it com-

plete, one of the wretch's long white hands with claw-like fingers is stretched out across his body in the direction of his eyes though not of his face, precisely as if he were going to grasp and crush some most unfortunate creature. The other hand holds in the back-ground a bundle of papers, which doubtless afforded the instruments of the legal hawking, which seems to have been the professional pursuit of the subject. Unless all physiognomy be a delusion, the owner of that face must have been one of the most portentously wicked of the race of Adam.

But we do not sit looking at this dreadful picture (though it is impossible to keep one's eyes from wandering to it now and then), but solace ourselves on arm-chairs and sofas, to talk and drink tea; or, best of all, to listen to our host reading with infinite taste some of the beautiful ballads of his country, which he does not weary to explain to his stupid guest. Sometimes he passes from poetry to history, and tells the yet unfinished tale of the great events in Italy and Europe in which he has borne a part. Who can live in Italy and not revert continually to the marvellous poem unrolling before our eyes—the

Regeneration of a Nation? Every subject leads into this one. Every day's newspaper adds to it another and yet another line. No small pleasure is it to be helped to read it clearly by one who, sympathising with the liberated people, is qualified to know the under-current of events, and wise and strong of head and heart to grasp the meaning of the whole great story.

Not every evening, however, in Villa G—— is so spent in garden and study. Sometimes the table has been surrounded by guests, and the beautiful hall and rooms above have been lighted and filled with flowers; and other "designing diplomats," and their families, and men and women of many lands are gathered together, and there is much singing and more talking; and *la petite Comtesse* plays Wagner and Chopin, as no child of eleven years old has any business to understand such things;—more shame to the young Swiss lady who is officially considered to be her instructress, but who is infinitely too charming and pretty to fulfil properly that necessarily severe and harsh duty of the nurture and admonition of the youthful mind—defects of her friend which, alas! *Grafinn* Hildegarde be-

trays by the sad results of altogether exuberant health and joyousness. And everywhere through the lighted and flower-filled rooms, beside every guest in turn, is the presiding spirit of this dear house—the good and kind and gifted mistress—that beautiful sight, a woman in her stately prime, spreading happiness through her home, and wide into the circles of the world beyond.

## CHAPTER XX.

### CI-DEVANT ITALIE.

THERE was a grim sort of joke in despoiling Victor Emanuel of Savoy just as he acquired the dignity of King of Italy. The old cradle among the rocks, from which his warlike race arose, was the forfeit for Lombardy conquered, and Tuscany permitted by Imperial condescension to annex herself. How the transfer was made—how Cavour put the province in pledge to the Shylock of the Tuileries, before ever a French soldier crossed the Alps to strike a blow at Magenta; and how, when the pound of flesh came to be exacted, there was a great deal of fumbling and speechifying; but at last the excision was effected, and the patient, by and bye, recovered, while the pound of flesh was duly devoured and *assimilated* by Shylock: all this is no concern of ours just now. We have heard,

indeed, sundry queer stories of how the Vox Populi, on the occasion of the Plebiscite, was gently aided and encouraged to speak. More arts than one seem to have been in practice; down to the mission of a tribe of pedlars, who converted all the good housekeepers of Savoy to the cause of France, by selling them French goods at fabulously cheap prices, assuring them that such was the usual cost of the same, in countries having the happiness to form a part of the Empire of Napoleon III. The non-appearance of any such pedlars, or, at least, of any such prices, since the Annexation, is a fact only too vividly realised by those who may have occasion to make purchases in the little ingenuous towns of sweet Savoy.

By whatever means the change was brought about, however, it does not seem as if the Savoyards lamented it seriously, or even sentimentally. The Kings of Sardinia, so far from showing favour to their original country, were rather hard masters to Savoy. Taxes were heavy, and public works few—in fact, Savoy paid for the honour of belonging to Italy. There was even a severe duty upon Savoyard goods carried over Mont

Cenis. The Italian conscription, which at the time of the annexation had obtained 12,000 recruits from Savoy, was in its terms of service less popular than that of France. Altogether there are enough *pros* to balance the *cons* of the change, to make the Savoyards sufficiently content. Some of them would have liked to remain Italian—others wished to become French—a few patriots, with rather sanguine ideas of the possibilities of nineteenth century diplomacy, urged that Savoy should be erected into an independent State. But all parties bowed to fate in the shape of the Emperor, with sufficiently good grace, and very soon the change of masters will be forgotten. The people, whose *patois* is about as near French as Italian, are learning French to deal with foreigners; and the laws of the Code Napoléon have superseded the old ones; and French red-trousered heroes figure about the barracks instead of Italian blue-trousered ones; and all is pretty nearly said and done necessary in the business. Perhaps I may be allowed, for the last time, to speak of Savoy as *ci-devant* Italie.

Countries differ from one another in their *physiognomies* very much as do races of human

beings. A type pervades the landscapes of each country, as the features of each race. There are brunettes and blondes, swarthy and xanthous countries—countries with hard bony outlines, and countries with soft swelling ones—lean hungry countries, and fat jovial ones—countries that frown on the beholder, and countries that smile on him—countries that are undeniably handsome, and yet somewhat repulsive—and countries which have no ostensible beauties, and yet are winning and home-like and loveable. Of all those types of countries, Savoy seems to me to resemble that not very common sort of person, who, at first sight, seems somewhat hard and cold, perhaps a little bitter, but whose countenance, all of a sudden, beams out into a smile more soft than ever belongs to faces habitually bright. Such countenances are among the most attractive in the world, when once understood; and have the property of holding the affections as well as attracting them. The face, on the contrary, which may be seen to smile a hundred yards off, whose lips are always curled upwards fixedly, while the eyes look sharply about them without any smiles at all, (such a face as that of Pio IX, for instance,)

loses its first attractiveness every time we look at it, till at last it becomes to us utterly *banale* and blank, if not false and treacherous. I have never seen one of these fixed smiles but they portended some harmful quality—sometimes it is ill-temper, sometimes perfidiousness; sometimes (curiously enough) religious fanaticism, appearing in all shapes, from that of nuns in convents in Ireland, France, and Italy, to the deluded victims of Brother Prince in the Agapêmone. When the human face has got something to lock up, this is the shape of its worst padlock. It is not used for hoarding sorrow, or love, or pain; the key leaves a different impress on the lips, when it is turned with patient resolution on these holier secrets. But there is a devil's padlock made of thin curved lips, which whoso sees may recognise for an evil token.

The first glance at Savoy is anything but of this smiling sort. The northern slopes of the Alps are immeasurably less rich than the southern; in fact, any region much more desolate is difficult to remember. The bare mountains are flaked with daubs of snow which, even in summer, lie in every hollow, to keep up the tenure of

the grim Frost Giant till he come again in October,

> Fiercely driven in his chariot-throne,
> By the tenfold blasts of the Arctic zone—

to re-assume his universal domain over these Alpine solitudes. The roads are bordered every few hundred yards by small stone cabins ominously labelled "Houses of Refuge"; perpetual memorials of storm and darkness, and miserable travellers lost in snow and wind, striving vainly to reach them in the wintry night. Crosses, too, there are—tall, bare-limbed crosses, not carved like those of the valleys, nor covered with all the dread insignia of Calvary, like those of Northern Italy; but gaunt beams of heavy wood, such as seem ready for a victim now. Why do they stand there, even closer to one another than the Houses of Refuge, and alternating in such ghastly sort of anachronism with the telegraph posts, which remind us of busy life and pleasure in the world below, yet through whose wires the keen wind of the mountain blows an eternal wail? The crosses are there to mark the spots where Death has ridden faster than the traveller and overtaken him; and Winter, Death's accomplice,

has hidden the corpse under his white winding-sheet; and when these two have gone away laughing in the howling wind, men have found the murdered wretch, and put up the cross over his grave. Below lie vast dreary valleys, with here and there scattered villages of poor cabins with stone roofs, weighted down by other and heavier stones to protect them against the storms. No gardens are there round these houses, huddled together like paupers at a workhouse door, in the snow. Hardly any cultured fields. The very belfries of the churches are poor dwarf things, covered with metal cloaks for protection from the blast. The pines on the mountain sides look black and wild, so that one hears without wonder that out of them every winter come troops of wolves to harry the villagers, and now and then a grim brown bear is seen, as the short wintry day closes, prowling outside the forest in search of his prey.*

Such is Savoy—dark, and rugged, and gloomy, on its frontier—only a few hours away from the glowing and luscious plains of Susa and Northern

* One was killed at St. Jean de Maurienne in 1863, which was sold in Paris for 900 francs.

Italy. But, by and bye, the smile is seen stealing over the hard cold face. Savoy is going to welcome us with other looks than these beetling cliffs and grim elf woods hanging over her brows. Down we sweep, past the bare mountains into the valley of the Isère, and, lo! the hills are covered with rich woods and delicious pastures, all filled with flowers, whose perfume flits across the road in gushes of sweetness; and the springs of clear water leap out from under the ash trees and the chestnuts; to the right and the left the valleys open, richer and softer one than another, till Savoy meets us face to face all beaming with tenderness and joy.

I have seen many rich spots in the world, but none more lovely than the valleys which reach from Chambery northwards, and in whose breast lies the Lac du Bourget. Leman is more grand, Lucerne more magnificent, Como more gorgeous, Asphaltites, under its Syrian sun, more glittering; but for pure loveliness and sweetness, there is surely none which excels that blue expanse wherein are reflected the peaks of the Dent du Chat (over which once shone Hannibal's spears), and the delicious vineyards and plane-trees of

the Tresserves. There is an opulence of Nature about Savoy which is marvellous. The herbage and the corn; meadow, and wheat, and buck-wheat, and hemp, and beans, set at defiance all rotation of crops, and bear year after year splendid harvests on the same ground. The foliage of the planes, acacias, and walnuts, is the richest conceivable, every leaf being above the usual size, and growing thicker than any "leaves on Vallombrosa." Never does there seem to be a blight on one of them, or even an early withering. In summer, when the corn is growing yellow, and the huge vines,—garlanded over every field, are in fullest leaf and blossom,—joining the perfume of their delicious flowers to the lime and the acacia, the whole country is a wilderness of beauty and fragrance. But the vintage in autumn is of course the glory of the year. It comes in Savoy just after the walnut harvest, when down every road the fine trees have been climbed by the boys, while mothers and sisters stood with baskets and carts below to catch the green fruit as they shook it over them; and, amid much laughter and play, the stores were brought home, then stripped of their green husks,

and sent away—perchance to be eaten at many an English and Scotch Hallowe'en. Everybody works in Savoy, whatever may be age or sex, apparently with complete impartiality. I have seen an old woman, of at least eighty, comfortably *sitting down* in the middle of a corn-field (doubtless her family property), and reaping and making sheaves as far as her poor old arms could reach! As to the children, jolly little blue-eyed imps, they seem to do half the work everywhere; an urchin of six, like Tom Thumb, often conducting a huge pair of oxen, and little demure damsels of five aiding vigorously at the vintage. Even the milch-cows are by no means let off from their share of labour on account of their interesting condition—interesting, at all events, one would think, to those who drink their milk. I have watched, day after day, from the charming *bosquet* of the Hotel des Princes, four of them patiently ploughing a field, conducted by an old lady of seventy or thereabouts; the man behind driving a plough constructed on the pattern of that of Cincinnatus. But it is no hardship, apparently, to cows, or old women, or babies either; for everything is done gently and peaceably, as be-

comes the inhabitants of a happy valley; and as to cruelty to animals, over-driving or beating them, I do not think any Savoyard is capable of such thing. Horses and dogs and oxen, and even the absurd black pigs of the country, which are actually *concave* underneath, and more like well-disposed hyænas than any beasts destined to become bacon,—all are made pets of. Often have I watched with pleasure a pair of magnificent oxen obeying meekly a single gentle word of their driver, walking over to their cart of apples or grapes, straddling across the pole to their places, and then waiting to have their heads fixed to the yoke as placidly as if dragging waggons was the principal pleasure of life. Double is the relief of such a sight, and of the friendly relations of man and horse and dog, coming from Italy, where "Non è Cristiano" is an argument apparently sufficient to justify complete indifference in the northern provinces, and the most atrocious cruelty in Naples. Savoyards are rather stupid, perhaps, but it would not come into their heads to do to their poor little curs what I have known a Tuscan gentleman do to his beautiful Pomeranian dog—cut off its tail as

a psychological experiment to promote domestic sentiments, or, as he explained it courteously to us, "*per affezionarlo alla casa!*" (to attach him to the house). Still less would they load a miserable lame jade of a horse, as I have continually seen Neapolitans do, with sixteen and even eighteen people, and then flog it into a furious gallop, or race down the tremendous hill of Capo di Monte (as my own driver once did against another charioteer) to the battering of the horse's feet utterly to pieces on the stones.

Probably some of the milder attributes which adorn the Savoyard character may be traceable to the circumstance that the more ill-disposed and vagrant of the nation are all provided for by the intelligent public of England, for whom Chiavari barrel-organs have an attraction. London is an Industrial School (not at all a Reformatory) for all the "vagrom men" and boys, the idle and roguish and disorderly inhabitants of Savoy. Thus there remain hardly any ill-disposed people in the country. The Maire of Aix himself told me that hardly any kind of crime passed under his notice. Theft is almost

unknown, as is evident from the habit of the people to hang baskets containing all their little stores by cords under the eaves of their houses, so that anybody might help himself without the least difficulty if so disposed. Only since the last few years have brought an influx of French, were cellars ever possessed of keys; the wine—and right good wine it is—was open to any passer by in every cottage. I am sorry to confess the Savoyards drink; on *fête* days, apparently, they drink a good deal; but it never seems to make them quarrelsome or mischievous, only good-humoured and foolish and affectionate. I never saw anything more ridiculous than the train of fellows, old and young, going home one afternoon, after a fair, and lining the pretty road from Aix les Bains to the Moulin des Primes. Everybody had either bought a pig or a cow, or was returning with a pig or cow which had failed to find a purchaser. The pigs and cows were, I suppose, sober, but somewhat independent. The men were much too kind to beat or even scold the beasts, and besides, had themselves and some rather far-gone friends to mind also. So

it was a confused journey altogether; but all full of good humour and laughing at mishaps, and ridiculous adjurations to the sharp and lively hyæna-pigs, to walk in the ways of wisdom and not turn back to root for comestibles. Among all the hundreds of people there was not an angry face, or loud voice, or rough act. It is certainly a singular fact that there should be so much drinking and so little crime in Savoy, and so little drinking but such abundance of crime in Italy.

Whether the Vine be the original Forbidden Fruit and tree of Evil, however, I shall not stop to inquire; but assuredly the vintage of Savoy is one of the loveliest sights in all the world. The land holds then its great Feast of Tabernacles, all festooned with purple wreaths. Everywhere the men are gathering the sweet grapes and dropping the bunches to the women and children, who catch them in their hands, and stow them away in the white wooden pails. At the corner of each field stands the heavy old cart, with its grey oxen patiently chewing the cud, and now and then stamping at too intrusive flies which

the pretty nets on their foreheads have not sufficed to banish; while some little child of five or six sits by them and plays at keeping the beautiful beasts, or climbs up and helps himself to some of the grapes in the huge tubs on the waggon. And round and beyond us on every side, are other fields of corn and vines, and lanes of walnut and acacia, and further yet the grand mountains and the lovely lake,—now emerald green, now turquoise blue,—gleaming through the trees and the garlands, till, far away, Mont Cenis, with his crown of snow, grows rosy in the setting sun.

A little story recording the effect which the beauty of a scene, just similar to this, once made on a traveller (a Princess of the House of Orleans, visiting her uncle the Duke of Lucca), was told me by Félicie de Fauveau, as we sat on the terrace of a villa on Bellosguardo, looking down the lovely Val-d'Arno, whence Milton drew his dream of Eden. I have tried to put it into verse, and shall end my little "Notes" by quoting it here as a last glimpse of the glory of the vine-clad South.

A princess came to a Southern strand,
Over a summer sea;
And the sky smiled down on the laughing land,
For that land was Italy.

And the lady gazed on the glorious scene,
Till the tears sprang in her eyes;
For hardly human sight may brook
The vision of Paradise.

The fruit-trees bent their laden boughs
O'er the fields, with harvest gold;
And the rich vines wreathed from tree to tree,
Like garlands in temples old.

And over all fell the glad sunlight—
So warm, so bright, so clear:
The earth shone out like an emerald set
In the diamond atmosphere.

Then down to greet that lady fair
Came the Duke from his palace hall:
"I thank thee, gentle Sire," she cried,
"For thy princely festival!

"For honoured guests have towns, ere now,
Been decked right royally:
But thy whole *land* is garlanded—
One bower of bloom—for me!"

Then smiled the Duke at the lady's thought,
And the thanks he had lightly won;
For Nature's eternal Festa-day,
She deemed was for her alone.

A poet stood by the Princess' side—
"O lady! raise thine eye:
The Giver of *this* great festival—
He dwelleth in yon blue sky!

"Thy kinsman prince hath welcomed *thee!*
But God hath His world arrayed,
Not more for thee than yon beggar old,
Who rests 'neath the ilex shade.

"His sun doth rise on the peasant's fields,
His rain on his vineyard pour;
His flowers bloom by the worn way-side,
And creep o'er the cottage door.

"For each, for all, is a welcome given,
And spread the world's great feast,
And the King of Kings is the loving Host;
And each child of man—a guest!"

FINIS.

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